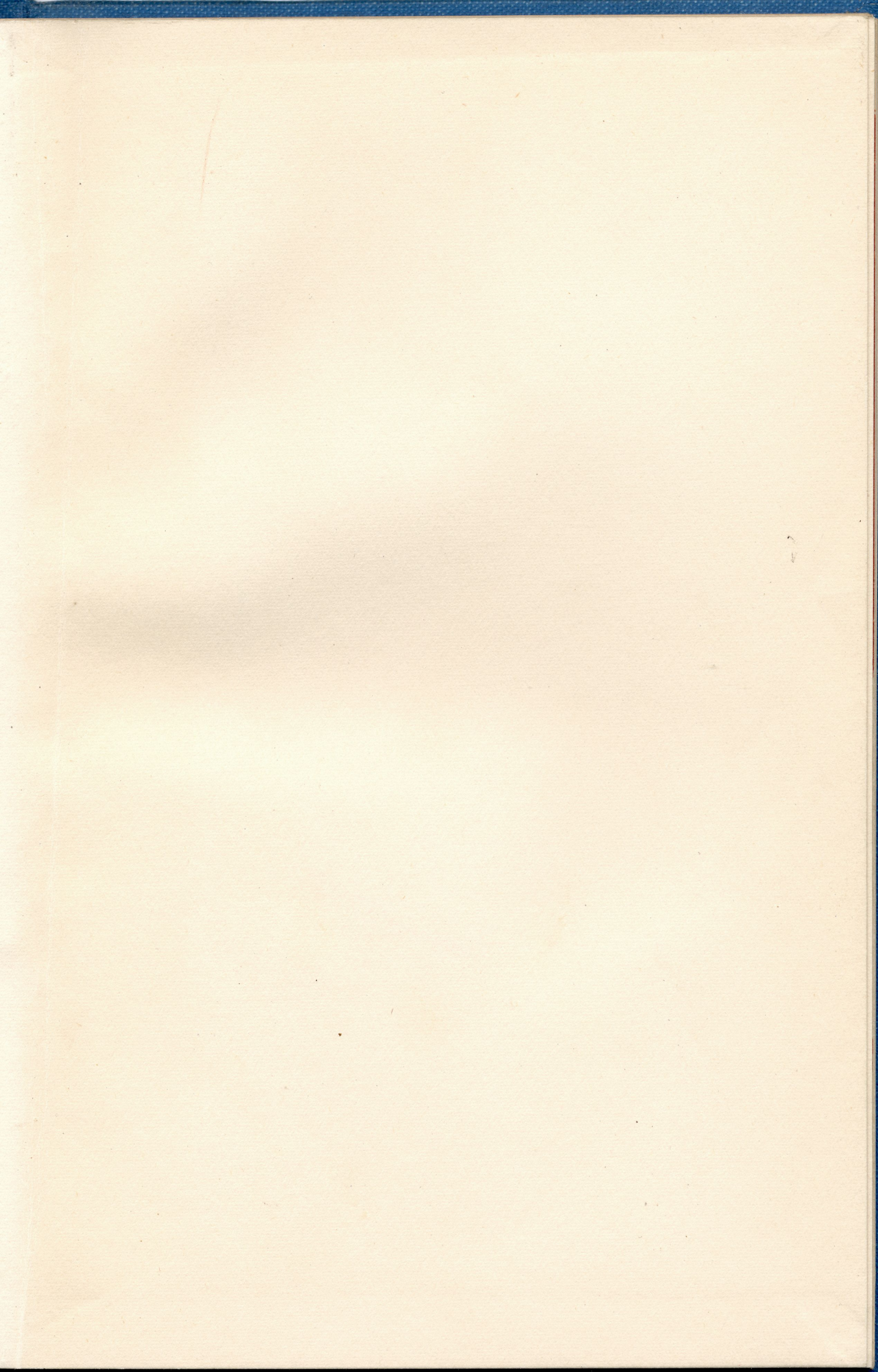


REINTRODUCTION OF
POLYNESIAN LABOUR
INTO QUEENSLAND
JAMES T. CRITCHELL

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SIR SAMUEL GRIFFITH'S MANIFESTO.—DR. PATON'S APPEAL : HIS STATEMENTS AND FIGURES DISPROVED.—THE KANAKA IN PARLIAMENT.—BISHOP SAUMAREZ SMITH AND BISHOP SELWYN *versus* BISHOP BARRY.—NEWSPAPER COMMENTS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE WIDESPREAD AND FATUOUS IGNORANCE OF THE LONDON PRESS.—CORRESPONDENCE AND CABLEGRAMS.—THE AGENT-GENERAL'S LETTER TO THE "TIMES."—THE PACIFIC ISLAND LABOURERS (EXTENSION) ACT AND REGULATIONS. MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION RELATING TO KANAKA LABOUR.

Important Letter from Mr. Kinnaird Rose, one of the Members of the 1885 Royal Commission.

COMPILED BY
JAMES TROUBRIDGE CRITCHELL.

LONDON :
British Australasian Office,
31, FLEET STREET, E.C.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.



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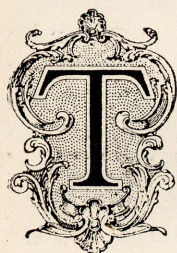
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INTRODUCTION.



THE Spring of 1892 will long be remembered by Queensland Colonists residing in Great Britain for the fierce attack made upon the Government and the people of that Colony by Dr. Paton and Exeter Hall. For I take it that in vehemently assailing the reintroduction of Polynesian labour into Queensland, the attack is delivered on the Government which framed the Enabling Bill, the Parliament which passed it, and the people of Queensland—who are most unmistakeably in favour of the policy. The time was well chosen for the campaign ; London was full of ministers attending the May Meetings, many of whom received Dr. Paton's "Protest" with open arms. This document arrived in London on May 3, 1892, and there is reason to believe that the rev. gentleman caused it to be scattered freely throughout the country. The business arrangements were excellent : a boom, a sensation, was set up, which has caused serious embarrassment to Her Majesty's Government, and pain and mortification to Queenslanders, who have seen the fair fame of their Colony dragged undeservedly in the mire. Within a few days there appeared articles and allusions in the British press, London and provincial, based on the missionary's paper, reflecting severely upon the Administration and the people of Queensland. In the case of some journals open hostility to Queensland was shown ; others simply scolded and misrepresented ; all (with two exceptions) were suspicious and unfriendly. Tory and Radical vied with each other in writing most falsely about the question ; no misstatement was too crusted to serve their purpose ; no abuse of the planters too outrageous. Whilst the storm raged for some twelve days, it was Queensland Slavery ! wherever one looked, on almost every broad-sheet, *ad nauseam*. Dalziel's cable from Australia, which appeared in the papers on May 14, reporting that the Hon. Mr. Playford had spoken of the Polynesians in Queensland as "practically slaves," was a most unfortunate message, which had the effect of hounding on our vilifiers to greater efforts of denunciation. The absurdity of this cable, which was corrected by the cable agency on May 17th, was apparent to Australians, yet here it was, part and parcel of the persecution.

On May 16th appeared in the *Times* a letter from Sir James Garrick, our Agent-General, and a leader was inserted in the same issue, which may be described as a fair attempt to place the matter properly before the public. Apparently, the word was passed round about this time to treat the Queensland Polynesian question with more moderation, for journals which, when the discussion was an open one, showed their unfriendly spirit to the colony in misstatements and threats, now turned round, and discovered that Queensland might be trusted to manage her own affairs, and that any

interference would precipitate a crisis! Somewhere about fifty articles, paragraphs, and letters, appeared within ten days of the arrival of Dr. Paton's paper, all of which, with four exceptions, those of the *Times*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, and two provincial papers, were unfriendly and uncharitable.

As a Queenslander, I do most energetically protest against the campaign of misrepresentation, ignorance, and animosity, which the English newspapers have conducted. Queensland would have welcomed the most searching criticism, had it been kindly. It makes one think that the attitude of friendly interest with which Colonial concerns have been treated of late years by English journalists is but a veneer, to be rubbed off whenever a situation arises in which home prejudices are at all involved. It was advisable to please the Dissenters and the Missionary Societies; so, forsooth, without efforts being made to examine carefully the case for the Colonists, Queensland had to go to the wall! Several Queenslanders over here have tried to stem the tide, and their letters appear with the articles to which they are replies further on.

Mr. C. C. Rawson had the honour of breaking the first lance in the lists, and with no less an antagonist than Bishop Barry. Mr. Rawson's letter drew one from Bishop Selwyn, to whom all Queenslanders should be grateful for his statement on the Labour Traffic; possibly no man in the world knows as much about the rights and wrongs of Polynesian labour as the Bishop does. Dr. Barry's letter was written before Mr. Paton's "protest" arrived.

Perhaps Colonists may agree with me in thinking that the circumstances justify the putting together of the newspaper comments and correspondence bearing on Dr. Paton's appeal to the people of Great Britain, and adding thereto the reports of the Parliamentary proceedings, and other documents. Some statistical information concerning the Kanaka labour trade is incorporated with the above. I have designedly selected the choicest bits from the newspaper articles, but a glance will show that in doing so I have not treated the writers unfairly; the sentiments are complete in themselves, and require no context.

This pamphlet proceeds from the deep indignation which I feel at the dead set made against Queensland. I may take the opportunity of expressing my fears that by this attempt of Dr. Paton to get the Imperial Government to disallow the Act—does the rev. gentleman, and do his followers here, realise what disallowing the Act of a self-governing Colony means?—the old-time misunderstanding between Missionaries and Colonists will not be lessened.

I do not aim to write an argumentative pamphlet; the letters printed speak for themselves. All I wish to do is to put into handy shape the materials available at the moment, for use on this side, and to form a memento for a few friends on the other of the way in which "Slavery in Queensland" became more than a nine days' wonder in London.

London, May 26th, 1892.

J. T. C.

KANAKA LABOUR, 1866 TO 1891.



THE first Polynesians brought to the Colony of Queensland, arrived at Bowen on September 29, 1866, in the *Percy*, brig, Crossley, owner. In the year 1868, an Act (afterwards repealed by the 1880 Act), was passed by the Colonial Parliament, placing the trade under State supervision, and at the present time there are seven Acts, Imperial and Colonial, regulating the Pacific Island Labour Trade.—See Appendix. I find, from Government statistics, that in this period of twenty-seven years (1866 to 1891) 47,758 Kanakas were brought to the colony.* By the 1880 Act, Government Agents were appointed, and it was laid down that no transfer be made except to employers engaged in tropical agriculture. The 1884 Act construed “tropical” to mean sugar fields, and by it the sale of firearms to the Islanders was stopped. The working classes of Queensland, who have strenuously and successfully opposed immigration into the colony, were, at that time, bitterly antagonistic to the employment of Kanakas, although the latter were only employed in the sugar fields, doing work which the planters have always maintained could not be done by white men. In 1885, a Royal Commission, consisting of Messrs. J. F. Buckland, W. Kinnaird Rose, and Hugh M. Milman, was appointed. Their Report, dealing with eight voyages only, and not with the general system, coupled with the ever-growing cry of the labouring classes, “Queensland for the White Man!” caused the passing of the 1885 Act, which stopped the issuing of licences after December 31, 1890. No complaints reached the Government after the sitting of the Commission for the five years from 1886 to 1890, though increasing numbers of Islanders were enlisted. From the passing of this Act, the sugar industry in Queensland began to decline; no fresh capital was put into the trade, sugar plantations ran down in value 50 to 75 per cent., mills closed on every hand, and this magnificent industry promised to die out. During last year the eyes of all thinking people in Queensland were opened to the folly of allowing the sugar plantations to become wildernesses, and the refineries ruins. Early in 1892 the newspapers welcomed correspondence on the subject of a *modus vivendi* as to coloured labour, and on February 12th appeared Sir Samuel Griffith’s “Manifesto to the People of Queensland” in the *Brisbane Courier*. This notable document I give in full. As the Premier of Queensland had more to do than any other man in the Colony with the Act of 1885, his moral courage in now advocating the reintroduction of Polynesians must be colossal! The *North Queensland Herald* (Townsville), in referring to the “inconsistency” cry, has the following sentiments:—“The only change of opinion that cannot be tolerated is that from good to evil. We can admire the man who allows himself to be converted from a bad position by the irresistible logic of fact.”

SIR SAMUEL GRIFFITH’S MANIFESTO.

“In common with the rest of the community, the Government have of late had their attention directed to the present condition of the sugar industry in Queensland, and especially to the difficulty of obtaining labour for carrying it on. It cannot be too often impressed upon our minds that we are directly or indirectly dependent for our livelihood on the productiveness of the cane of the colony, and any falling off in its productiveness, from whatever cause, is therefore a matter of national concern. It has been urged that the revival of the sugar industry, which is at present

(* Dr. Paton’s “Appeal” has the following:—“This traffic has taken away some 70,000 of the most healthy lads and girls from the New Hebrides, and similar proportions from other groups.”)

in a condition of depression and uncertainty, would result in the restoration of prosperity throughout the colony; but, while I am unable to attribute to this cause alone so much of the prevailing depression as some people are disposed to think—many other causes being apparent, not only in Queensland, but throughout the rest of Australia—I have arrived at the conclusion that it is the imperative duty of the Government, and, perhaps, more especially of myself, to whom, rightly or wrongly, most of the blame or credit of the existing state of things has been attributed, to review the present position and to state plainly what we think is the right policy to be adopted by the country at this time. The urgency of the case induces me to adopt at the present a somewhat unusual mode of declaring that opinion. You are aware that I have been for many years one of the most determined opponents of the introduction of servile or coloured labour into Queensland. My objection has not been on account of the colour of men's skins; but I have maintained that the employment of such labour under conditions to which we had become accustomed was injurious to the best interests of the colony regarded as a home for the British race, and principally for the following reasons:—(1.) It tended to encourage the creation of large landed estates owned for the most part by absentees, and worked by gang labour, and so discouraged actual settlement by small farmers working for themselves. (2) It led to field labour in tropical agriculture being looked down upon as degrading and unworthy of white races. (3) The permanent existence of a large servile population amongst us not admitted to the franchise is not compatible with the continuance of our own free political institutions. To these reasons was added, so far as Polynesian labour is concerned, the discredit that had been brought upon Queensland by the abuses that for some years prevailed in the South Sea Island trade. I recognise the force of those reasons as fully as ever. It was, however, answered that tropical agriculture could not be performed by white men, and that the employment of coloured labour was therefore inevitable. This statement I always doubted, and careful inquiries made from time to time led me to reject it altogether. My objections to Polynesian labour were, however, from first to last less strong than to the introduction of Asiatics. The people of the Pacific Islands are not so numerous as to be a permanent danger to our social or political institutions, and I have always regarded their employment as temporary and transitional, expedient though it was. Therefore, in 1885 I was induced, under circumstances to which I need not now refer, to propose to put a limit upon the time within which they might be introduced, and this proposal, which was accepted by the Legislative Assembly without division, though not without dissent, was, I believe, supported as much on the grounds of scandals which had attended the labour trade as for any other reason. Let me now invite your attention to what has happened since that time. I will state the results only; but I premise that these results are, in my opinion, due in great part to the legislation to which I have referred, as well as to the general conviction on the part of the planters, as well as the people generally, that a radical change was necessary in the system of sugar culture. In the first place, the system of large estates worked by gang labour has fallen into disfavour. The owners are not only willing but anxious to sell or lease portions of their estates to farmers who would themselves grow cane and sell it to the manufacturers, and it is recognised, I think generally, that in future the cultivation of cane and the manufacture of sugar must be in different hands. In the second place, it has been established by actual trial that sugar is a profitable crop to be grown by small farmers, if they can command a sale for it to the manufacturers at reasonable prices, and this system is already carried on with great success, notably in Bundaberg, Mackay, and the Herbert District. In the third place, it has been proved that in Queensland cane can be grown by white labour. I am aware that this position is still disputed, but it is admitted by most of the more liberal-minded planters with whom I have been in communication. These results have not, however, been attained without troubles which invariably attend trying new experiments. Successive Governments have endeavoured to assist enterprising experiments by giving facilities for the introduction of European labour of various kinds, and by aid to central mills, but these endeavours have been counteracted from two different directions. While some of the planters have loyally tried to make the best of the altered conditions and prospects—and I am glad to know in many instances with conspicuous success—others for a long time set their faces against any change, and did all in their power to compel a return to the old objectionable state of things. On the other hand, amongst the working

population whose interests I had, perhaps, exclusively in view, there has arisen a body of men claiming to be leaders of thought, who have by speech and action rendered it impossible that the experiment of the employment of white labour in tropical agriculture should be favourably tried. There are not at present in Queensland a sufficient number of Europeans able and willing to do the necessary work and to take the place of the Polynesians who are gradually leaving the colony, and of whom no more can be introduced under existing laws. Yet every opposition has been offered to the introduction of any additional labour. The opinion has been promulgated that field labour in tropical agriculture is degrading, and the employment of white labour in that industry has been denounced, except at rates of wages which the industry cannot pay. In short, these men will neither engage in work themselves, nor, so far as they can prevail, allow any one else to do so. In the meantime, planters, as well as the smaller farmers already engaged in sugar culture, do not know where to turn for the necessary labour to cultivate and take off their crops, while many others, anxious to engage in the industry on new conditions, are deterred from doing so for the same reasons. The immediate prospect is that many of the mills will be closed, and some removed, and the productiveness of the lands of the colony, instead of being largely increased, will be seriously diminished. We are, then, in this position:—On one hand, it is proved that the sugar industry offers a field for the settlement of numberless families upon land where they can live and bring up families in comfort; the danger of the aggregation of large estates is past, and it is shown that Europeans can engage in the industry with success when certain preliminary work has been done. On the other hand, in many places that preliminary work has not yet been done, and where it has been done the necessary European labour is not here, and cannot at present, nor for some time to come, be brought here, and before it can be brought here, under existing conditions, there is great danger that the means of employment for it will to a great extent have disappeared. What then is to be done? It is, I conceive, the duty of the Government under such circumstances to offer their advice to the people. At the last general election the question of the continued introduction of Polynesian labour was treated as settled in the negative, and I accept a full share of the responsibility for that result; but, in my opinion, the altered condition of things not only justifies but demands the re-consideration of the whole position, and it seems to me that there are only two alternatives—to do nothing and let the sugar industry slowly struggle on until the necessary European labour can be introduced and acclimatised, with the possible result that in the meanwhile it may be greatly diminished if not altogether extinguished; or to take some action to bridge over the interval which must necessarily elapse before the change of system can be brought about. This can only be done by making immediate provision for the supply of some labour which is at once available. With such supply I believe that in a few years the existing large plantations would be divided amongst small farmers, while large numbers of farms now held by selectors would be devoted to the cultivation of sugar cane for sale to central mills. Such result, which is now no longer a matter for fanciful conjecture, is, I think, worth striving for, and we ought to adopt means most likely to bring it about. The only form of labour that is, under existing circumstances, immediately available for this purpose seems to be Polynesian labour, and I think, as I have said, that this labour is less open to objection than any other form of coloured labour. If, then, the system now happily inaugurated of small farmers is to be carried on to final success, I can see no alternative but to permit—for a time, at any rate—the resumption of Polynesian immigration. Adequate provisions must, of course, be made—and they can be made—for preventing abuses in the introduction of the labourers, and for preventing them from entering into competition with white labourers in other occupations, and it should be provided that the immigration shall continue, unless, of course, otherwise determined by legislature, for the definite but limited period of, say, ten years. By that time, I have no doubt, such further development will have taken place as will enable the sugar industry to be carried on without fear of our reverting to the former system with its dangerous incidents and consequences; and in the meantime I believe that a valuable impetus will be given to the producing industries of the colony. I have not arrived at this conclusion hurriedly, nor, I confess, without reluctance, and I am not unaware that I may be charged with inconsistency; but those who keep steadfastly in view the great end of settling a European population upon the lands of the colony and the maintenance of our free political institutions, will know that under existing circumstances this end

can only be attained by a temporary change in the means, and will not be deterred by fear of a charge of inconsistency from proposing the only practicable means. I believe that the adoption of this course at the present time will tend to that end; and for the reasons I have given. I am satisfied that the social and political welfare of the people will not now be imperilled by it. I should add that, while my colleagues concur in the conclusions, I am alone responsible for this political retrospect and for the argument."

S. W. GRIFFITH.

Brisbane, February 12.

DR. PATON'S APPEAL.

Dr. Paton urged the Premier to reconsider his determination, to which Sir Samuel Griffith replied as follows:—

Merthyr, Brisbane, 27th February, 1892.

MY DEAR SIR,—It was not without much reluctance that I came to the conclusion that it is the right thing to do to remove the prohibition against the introduction of Polynesians into Queensland. I am fully sensible—no one more so—of the abuses that prevailed. They had, however, been reduced almost to a minimum by the end of 1890, and still more stringent provisions will be made in the future, if it is in my hands. I have publicly given my reasons at length for my change of opinions, and have nothing more to add to them except this—that I could not sit still and look calmly on at the ruin of hundreds and thousands of our own people from want of labour to utilise the rich resources of the country, when such labour is available, as I believe, without any moral wrong-doing. This is the pass to which the insensate action of the so-called labour party has brought us. You are quite mistaken in supposing that my action is avowedly or at all in the interests of the planters exclusively. I think of them, but I have in my mind the whole people with whose interests I am charged, and I do what my conscience bids me.—Yours very truly (signed), S. W. GRIFFITH.

DR. PATON'S PROTEST AGAINST A REVIVAL OF THE TRAFFIC.

"At the close of A.D. 1890, the Kanaka labour traffic was suppressed in Queensland, chiefly by the influence of Sir Samuel Griffith, in denouncing its atrocious crimes and murders as a disgrace to humanity, and to Queensland; but all the labour vessels which could sail with licences before the last day of 1890 kept returning with their loads of recruits till far into 1891; and having put on additional vessels for that year, and for years before it, they got an extra supply, and bound all to serve in the Colony for three years. Then seeing that it is only about seven or eight months since the planters ceased to get additional labour, and seeing very many thousands of these Polynesians are now working on the plantations, closing the traffic cannot account for the decline of the sugar industry in Queensland. It has been declining for many years past, as he knows well. This traffic has taken away some 70,000 of the most healthy lads and girls from the New Hebrides, and similar proportions from other groups, nearly half-depopulating our islands. Though the young and healthy chiefly were taken away, yet from long hours of labour, hard work, and changed circumstances of food, clothing, and houses, the mortality among them has been very great, often the largest per cent. in the world, by which many thousands of them have been laid in their graves in Queensland, buried like dogs, and others brought so to labour, suffer, and die by the planter's greed of gain. Dreadful immorality is also encouraged among them, but the veil must be drawn here. The law forbids giving them intoxicating drinks, yet they get them; and a planter informed another minister and me that he dreaded Sabbath, as by drink on it they fought, and he could scarcely keep them from burning their houses and his own. I heard another planter say that for £10 he had sold them two hogs for a feast, after which they had savage fighting to the amusement of a crowd of white onlookers, and even police, who said they could not interfere till they had broken the peace, wounding or killing each other. In this way a number of Sabbaths were spent. On the sugar plantations by law they are paid 4d. per day, if they live to get it, for doing work for which they would have to pay white men from 5s. to 8s. per day. The poor islanders have no rights in common with white people; and as they do not, or dare not, complain, in all respects they serve the planters' purpose best. On the Clarence and Richmond rivers, in New South Wales, many small farmers and planters seem to

make a good living by producing the sugar-cane by white labour and selling it to the mills. Thus a large population is supported by it without Kanaka labour, why should it not be so in Queensland? But with the internal knowledge of this shocking traffic which Sir Samuel Griffith possesses we cannot conceive that such a wise, far-seeing, statesman as he is does not feel that by renewing and continuing its traffic for another ten years, instead of reviving he is almost sure to kill the sugar industry there, as the cruel oppression and bloodshed by it will cry to heaven for revenge, not only on the murderers, but on its employers, and on him for renewing it, seeing he knows well that such crimes have always been inseparable from it. Yet no doubt, as in its worst past, many will even now defend it, and boast of the kind treatment and advantages to the poor islanders from being on the plantations; but I have seen them treated there as no other portion of the human race could be treated. Before me, and a number of gentlemen, a planter put the following questions to a company of his men: "Are you happy?" "Do you like plantation work?" "Do you get plenty of food?" "Would you like to go back to your islands?" They replied *yes* or *no* to his delight, when he said, "You see how happy they are," &c. Soon after I asked them the same questions, in their own language, when their answers were the reverse of what they had before given, and they implored me to get them taken home to Tanna. The traffic is a system of deception and cruel oppression all through to the islanders.

In proof of this I shall quote from the report of the last Royal Commission, which in Queensland examined all available witnesses regarding the conduct of six labour vessels for one year. "1. As to the circumstances under which the islanders were engaged. 2. The manner in which the nature of the engagements was explained to them. 3. The understanding by the recruits of the nature of the engagements, and the period for which they had agreed to serve." The investigations of the Commission continued from the beginning of January till about the end of May, 1885, and its report is printed in 190 pages, $13 \times 8\frac{1}{4}$. The vessels appointed for examination were the *Ceara*, *Lizzie*, *Hopeful*, *Forest King*, *Heath*, and *Sybil*, all under the strictest bonds and regulations of the traffic at present. Yet the report says:—

1. Of the *Ceara*, page 26:—"Our opinion is that all the recruits brought by the *Ceara* on this voyage were seduced on board by false pretences; that the nature of their engagements was never fully explained to them; that they had little or no comprehension of the nature of the work they had to perform; that the period for which they agreed to come was in no single instance for three years."

Second voyage of the *Ceara*, page 27:—"Our opinion is that a system of deliberate fraud was practised in engaging all the recruits during this voyage. . . . that none believed they had agreed to remain in Queensland for three years."

2. Of the *Lizzie*, at page 26:—"We are of opinion that not one of the labourers brought by the *Lizzie* on this voyage agreed when recruited to serve and remain in Queensland for three years; that the nature of the engagements was never duly explained or understood by them, and that the method of recruiting was cruelly deceptive, and altogether illegal." Of the second voyage of this vessel, page 28:—"On reviewing the whole evidence as to recruiting on this voyage of the *Lizzie* we are of opinion that while some of the natives were forcibly kidnapped, all of them were allured on board by false statements; that the nature of the engagement to which they subsequently attached their marks was deliberately misrepresented to them; and that they had no clear understanding that they were coming to work on a Queensland sugar plantation for three years."

3. Of the *Hopeful*, at page 32:—"We are of opinion that none of the recruits on board the *Hopeful* were lawfully recruited, and that not one understood he had to remain and serve in Queensland for three years." We give more about this vessel below.

4. Of the *Sybil*, at page 34:—"We are of opinion that the attempts made to explain the nature of the engagements to the recruits, both at the islands, and at the port of arrival, were wholly inadequate; that the engagements were not fully understood by the recruits; and that none of them appreciated that the term of service for which they had left their homes was for three years." The inspector at Mackay, having read the *Sybil's* log, made the following entry:—"Having read this log, it is a record of drunkenness and incapacity on the part of the master, and consequent insubordination on the part of the crew."

5. Of the *Forest King*, at page 35:—"We are of opinion that all the recruits

brought by the *Forest King* were decoyed on board under false pretences, that the nature of their engagements was not explained to them, and that none of them understood that they were to work on a sugar plantation for any period, much less for three years."

6. Of the *Heath*, at page 36 :—"Our opinion is, the recruits brought by the *Heath* were enticed on board under false pretences ; that the nature of their engagement was never satisfactorily explained to them ; and that none of them comprehended that they were coming to Queensland to work on a sugar plantation for three years." These reports prove that deception is the practice ruling in this traffic.

The report states that the mortality among the natives brought by these vessels straight from the islands in their most healthy condition was as follows :—"Of 107 by the *Ceara*, first voyage, 26 were dead. Their deaths per cent. on the plantations were 24·3 in one year—page 37. Of 137 by the *Ceara*, second voyage, 22 were dead. Their deaths per cent. on the plantations were 16·0 in ten months, p. 39. Of 126 by the *Lizzie*, first voyage, 12 were dead. Their deaths per cent. on the plantations were 9·5 in one year, p. 38. Of 66 by the *Lizzie*, second voyage, 11 were dead. Their deaths per cent. on the plantations were 16·6 in eight months, p. 40. Of 112 by the *Hopeful*, 13 were dead. Their deaths per cent. on the plantations were 11·6 in seven months, p. 41. Of 37 by the *Sybil*, 6 were dead. Their deaths per cent. on the plantations were 16·2 in four months, p. 42. Of 21 by the *Forest King*, 2 were dead. Their deaths per cent. on the plantations were 26·3 in two and a-half months, p. 43."

Of the doings of the *Hopeful*, the commission says at page 29 :—"At Merari thirty recruits were taken on board. Some declared that in stretching up the side of the ship for tobacco in exchange for their fruits, they were dragged on board by M'Neil and Alec against their wishes, and taken away. At Bentley Bay, by M'Neil and Alec, a woman and several young men were, under threats of being shot, ordered by M'Neil or dragged by Preston into the boat. This woman, who had been wounded in the struggle, afterwards escaped by swimming on shore at Teste Island. Both boats subsequently returned to the shore, the people ran into the bush, and M'Neil set fire to their houses. At Ferguson Island natives came out in canoes to trade with the *Hopeful*. Two of her boats were lowered. One manned by M'Neil, Preston, Harry, Jack, and Alec ; and the other by Barney Williams, Rogers, Charley, and the two Teste Island boys. The canoes turned shoreward, upon which chase was given. M'Neil followed one with eight natives in it, and Williams another with six or seven in it. M'Neil was unable to overtake the one he was pursuing, when he stood up in his boat and fired at the canoe. . . . The steersman fell in the canoe dead ; the ball also struck the man in front of him, who fell overboard and sank. The occupants of the canoe leapt into the water, and M'Neil cut it with a tomahawk, and directed his crew to pick up the natives who were swimming in the water. Four were so rescued, and to prevent their escape, placed under the thwarts of the boat. The other canoe was cut by Williams, and the other natives, as usual, took to the sea. A rifle was fired and one islander shot. Five and a small boy were picked up by the boat. One of the rescued islanders jumped over from the boat, whereupon Williams followed him with a large knife in his hand, and as the native was coming up on the reef, Williams cut the poor wretch's throat, and he sank into deep water. The boat then pulled up to the reef, Williams leapt into it, and the two boats joined company. The little boy, who was of no use as a recruit, was cast adrift on two coconuts, which were tied together under his arms. The little fellow was seen to slip from the nuts, and drown in the surf. The canoe M'Neil had cut contained the dead body of the steersman. Williams cut the head off, and the mutilated remains were thrown overboard. There were now four natives in each boat under the thwarts, to prevent their escape. These eight escaped when sent to the Victoria Plantation, Queensland, and wandered about in the bush for two months, and when at last found they were conveyed to Ingham.

"At Normanby Island, on M'Neil landing, the natives ran away into the bush, and were followed by M'Neil, Williams, Preston, and Rogers. Rifle shots were heard, and M'Neil and his men returned to the boats. Preston declared he had killed two men, and Williams owned to having shot a boy. That night two boys escaped, and next day M'Neil went on shore, and threatened to fight if the boys were not got. He fired two houses near the beach. The natives rushed out, throwing spears and stones at the boat's crew ; the boat's crew responded with rifles, by which two native men were killed. At Ciaivata Island a canoe with

five natives came out from the island. In a boat manned by M'Neil (agent), Captain Schofield, Preston, Rogers, Alec, Harry, and Jack, they pulled after the canoe. The natives shook their heads, saying they did not want to go. M'Neil cut the canoe with a tomahawk, and the natives jumped into the water. Four of the five were picked up and put under the thwarts to prevent their escape till they got to the ship. It was too dark to see the fifth. . . . That night, to prevent the boys escaping, a sentry was placed on deck with a rifle. Next morning M'Neil and Williams's boats gave chase to a canoe containing four natives, who refused to come to the ship. M'Neil cut the canoe, and it sank. Three of the boys were picked up, and the fourth was also dragged into the boat, and so taken away. Again calling at Teste Island, twenty-eight recruits escaped about two miles off shore. After all this the *Hopeful* was boarded by the boarding officers of H.M.S. *Swinger*, who overhauled the Government Agent's log (M'Neil's) and the captain's, and 'finding all right,' the next day the *Hopeful* sailed for Queensland."

The Royal Commission sums all up, saying, page 32 :—"The history of the cruise of the *Hopeful*, of which the foregoing is an outline drawn from the evidence submitted to us, is one long record of deceit, cruel treachery, deliberate kidnapping, and cold-blooded murders. The number of human beings whose lives were sacrificed during the recruiting can never be accurately known. In addition to the two men killed at Samaroa, for which Williams and M'Neil were tried and condemned by the Supreme Court . . . the stories narrated to us more than confirmed the facts brought out at the public trial. There is in our estimation abundant evidence of the commission of many other murders. The inhuman slaughter of the natives of Hilewow was amply corroborated by six or seven witnesses. Anything more heartrending we have never heard nor seen than the tale of the father drowning his little boy, or the horror depicted in Waneipa's eyes and face when describing the doing to an atrocious death the boy on the reef. All were at one as to the shooting and throat-cutting, and the main incidents were testified to by the boatmen Jack and Charley."

I have quoted this history of the traffic from the report of the Royal Commission, as none should doubt its truthfulness; but much more from many sources can be produced to prove its disgraceful cruel character, so steeped in human suffering, bloodshed, and deaths on the islands and at sea from its commencement up to the present; though only now and again law has been able to bring to light such a multitude as Dr. Murray slaughtered in his vessel, or as were murdered by the *Hopeful* crew. With such a history by the Royal Commission from six vessels, under all their safeguards to prevent such crimes, what would it have been if they had been able to expose the conduct of all the fifteen or sixteen labour vessels in 1890, and for years before that, which were trying by every means possible for the Queensland sugar plantations to secure all the labourers they could before it closed? How is it that for many years the sugar industry has been declining in Queensland, and fortunes made and quickly lost in it, and other industries not prospering? No doubt God's curse rests on the sugar industry, and the money made by it, and on the colony which licenses it and condones its crimes to make riches by it.

When a petition with 28,000 signatures was presented to the Governor-in-Council in Queensland to get the murderers and kidnappers in the *Hopeful* pardoned, and "a deputation waited on Sir Samuel Griffith to get M'Neil and Williams reprieved from the gallows, they pled for mercy on the ground that 'these atrocities had been common in the traffic, and it was hard to make these men the first victims.'" Regarding the *Hopeful* Sir Samuel said "he had never heard of such a voyage of murderous atrocities. At East Cape, New Guinea, natives took trade from a boat, and bolted to the bush. The white men followed, one was speared, a fight followed, and thirty-eight natives were shot." He then told them of other natives having been shot, two drowned, two women struck by tomahawks on the head, and other fifteen kidnapped; "all different from the crimes for which the men of the *Hopeful* had been tried. When he first read the papers he exclaimed it would have been the right thing if every one of them had been hung from the yardarm."—*Brisbane Courier*.

How can it be possible that Sir Samuel Griffith, with his eyes so opened to the past horrors of this dreadful traffic, is not only going to condone them all, but also renew it, licensing those or other labour vessels with their fiendish crews in human form, having no more than the crew of the *Hopeful* had to prevent them repeating daily for ten years the same crimes. Henceforth who will be responsible for them?

Though federation of all our churches and colonies is much to be desired for many reasons, yet with such undoubted evidence now before the world of the real character and crimes of this traffic, if he does renew it, and is allowed to do so without a very strong protest against it by the churches and people of Queensland—I hope every other Australian church and colony will show their abhorrence of it by protesting against it in the strongest terms, refusing to be federated with a church and colony so lost to all sense of right and wrong, to all pity for the suffering and murdering of defenceless men and women, and so as not to be responsible for and suffer in the punishment sure to follow a renewal of this traffic with its crimes. For as nearly all the available labour has already by the traffic been taken away from our islands to Queensland, Fiji, New Caledonia, Samoa, the Pearlshell fisheries in Torres Straits, and to work for interested traders and planters—where many thousands of them have found their graves, with now the ever-increasing demand for such cheap labour, and the increasing difficulty to get the few natives who remain away from their island homes, atrocities in recruiting are likely to greatly increase while the traffic exists.

As we praised Sir Samuel for closing this traffic with its evils in 1890, so now most solemnly we protest against his reopening it. I protest in the interests of our islanders and mission, of the planters and their collectors, of Queensland and humanity, and for the dishonour to Sir Samuel, Australia, and Britain. I feel bound to do so as a duty to God and His cause, for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. And I plead most earnestly with the Press, the Churches, and all our colonies to protest, and do all possible to avert this dreadful calamity to all concerned, especially to Sir Samuel, the planters, and Queensland.

I plead with our beloved Queen Victoria, the British Government, and all in her Dominions, to do all possible, forever to suppress this shocking traffic, and destruction of human life by it, to secure cheap labour in our British colonies, and that Britain would annex the New Hebrides, and add another rich source of wealth to her Australasian possessions, and be able to forever close this traffic in them, in the persons of men and women, to traders of all nations. English, French, German, Americans, Swedes, &c., have now on our islands a free field for hunting down and obtaining cheap labour for any place in which they find a market for it, and in which they can and do, as seen by the above quotations, commit the most atrocious crimes and murders without exposure, restraint, or punishment. Surely all who permit, license to collect, and employ such labour, will be held responsible in the eyes of God for all its crimes; for even with its enforced force of a three years' engagement I hold it is the worst kind of slavery, scarcely under a cloak to any now. Alas, alas! for our poor down-trodden islanders, and those who are so destroying them by this traffic. They have suffered much as labourers in Queensland, and seemingly in punishment, Queensland has suffered much by her own labourers."

THE QUEENSLAND CLERGY ON DR. PATON'S APPEAL.

The following five letters are from recent numbers of the *Brisbane Courier* :—

"SIR,—It is with a feeling of the deepest distress and pain that I read this morning the correspondence that recently took place between the Rev. Dr. Paton and Sir S. W. Griffith, the Chief Secretary of Queensland, respecting the reintroduction of kanaka labour into this colony, together with Dr. Paton's indignant protest against it. No one honours Dr. Paton more than I do. He is a distinguished minister of the gospel, whose praise is in all the churches for his devoted missionary zeal and his great success in Evangelising the New Hebrides Islands. And no man can deplore more than I do the cruelty and wickedness exhibited in past years on several occasions in deporting the Kanakas from their own islands. Yet, notwithstanding this, I must write a few words to help in checking, if possible, the evils likely to accrue from the attitude Dr. Paton has taken, and the publication of his protest. I can speak with some authority, not only as convener of the Heathen Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland, but as having myself, a few months back, visited the Mackay district in the interests of our heathen mission there. It may be said that was only one district out of the seven or eight in the colony that employ these

islanders; still, out of the gross number of Kanakas in Queensland registered up to January, 1891—namely, 9362, there were in the Mackay district, 2816. I visited also briefly the Bundaberg district, where there are 2846 islanders, and, though I had time to see only a few of the plantations, they were the principal ones, containing the greatest number of islanders in that district, and, I presume, that what I saw may be taken as a tolerably fair estimate of what occurs over the rest.

In summing up Dr. Paton's letters and protest, I find charges brought against Queensland in connection with the use of this traffic, the whole tone of which generally is fitted to wound to the very quick the sensibilities of most of the Christian God-fearing men and women of this colony. Surely Dr. Paton should have seriously hesitated before flinging abroad on the public such assertions as these:—That "the traffic has been demoralising and ruinous to all connected with it in all its past history;" that "it has blunted, if not destroyed, the best feelings of the nature of many of their employers, and also of the Queensland public generally;" that "the atrocious crimes and murders connected with the traffic are a disgrace to humanity and to all Queensland;" that "their long hours of labour, hard work, and changed circumstances of food, clothing, and houses, have caused unexampled mortality amongst them;" that "when they died they were buried like dogs;" that "dreadful immorality was encouraged amongst them;" that "he was told that a planter dreaded the Sabbath because of the drinking and fighting of the men, and the danger they were in of burning down their houses;" that "the cruel oppression and bloodshed cry to Heaven for vengeance;" that "sugar planters may not care for such agony," and even "wink at all such crimes, but God sees and will avenge;" that, in fine (to use his own words), "it is the worst kind of slavery, scarcely under a cloak to any now." Now, sir, I simply ask, is not the mere launching of such charges against the planters, Government, and entire people of Queensland, fitted to cut to the quick, if not to prove revolting to, the feelings of the whole population of Queensland? Are we really, for the sake of earthly gain, winking at such horrible crimes and atrocities? Are the planters slaveholders of the worst description? Is a system of slavery, the most atrocious conceivable, openly sanctioned amongst us? Grave, terrible charges indeed! Are we such an utterly demoralised colony? Is all truth and honour and righteousness dead in Queensland? Are there no really right-thinking, right-feeling Christians left amongst planters or people? Even to allege such charges, without the most incontestable proofs, must be painful and galling in the extreme, and even revolting, to the Queenslanders as a whole; while the aspect in which it will publicly exhibit the colony will not only damage our credit in the eyes of the commercial world, but load us with obloquy before the united humanity and Christianity of the entire civilized world.

But, coming to the charges themselves, I must say they are hasty, and betray a serious overlooking of the real question at issue and the exact state of things existing now in connection with the traffic. I have no intention of going into all the details of atrocities recorded as perpetrated years ago in deporting the islanders here, or at present in the employing of them, but I shall only say a few things by way of endeavouring to counteract the impression likely to be created by them.

1. Even granting these charges of "cruelty" and "encouraged immorality" are strictly correct, there is one great fallacy that runs through all Dr. Paton's reasoning—namely, that the evils in question are "inseparable from the traffic." I was greatly pleased with a leader in your columns of the 22nd instant, in which you, as I think, hit the nail on the head, in showing that, supposing these things to be true, they were not "inseparable from the traffic," and that Sir S. W. Griffith, while admitting their existence to some extent in time past, and objecting to them as strongly as Dr. Paton could do, had become a convert to the renewal of this labour, because he believed it could be renewed under proper, equitable, and Christian conditions, and that it was his intention and that of others in the Government to see that these were carried out. If this be so, and we believe it can be proved to be so, and will be proved to be so, the evils deplored are not "inseparable from the traffic," and no one has any right to make the solemn assertion that they are.

2. But looking at the charges themselves, I consider them—to say the least of it—hasty, and, from defective knowledge, in several points utterly unfounded. So far as the deportation of these men from their islands is concerned, the last Royal Commission, examining all the available witnesses regarding the conduct of six labour vessels for one year reported that "most of the men were decoyed away on false pretences from their islands," and that "the mortality amongst them was very great in the

plantations, rising in some cases as high as 26 per cent." As to their being "decoyed away on false pretences," I have no means of contradicting this, though I believe it has been exaggerated when taken as a specimen of the thing as a whole, while I consider the statement hasty in that it overlooks the fact that this commission reported on a state of things eight years back; and that, even supposing it were *then* strictly correct, it is not reasonable or fair to imply from it, as is done, that the system is continuing and must continue, as inseparable from the traffic, in all future time. As to the mortality of the Kanakas in the plantations, there must be some strange mistake. I speak as I know, having spent a month amongst the Mackay plantations in September, and made full inquiries at least in that district. I went to the offices of the police-magistrate, the Polynesian inspector, and the registrar in Mackay, and was informed that the death-rate among the Kanakas, very considerable at first, had been steadily diminishing year by year for the last five years, and that during last year (1890) it had been far less than the average seemingly implied in Dr. Paton's details. I found in "the annual report of the Pacific Island Immigration Department" for 1891 that in Mackay during 1890 there were resident 2816 Kanakas, of whom 98 died. Now, if the statistics collated by Dr. Paton are correct, more than a fourth of these should have died—not 98, but more than 700. From the same report I found that at Bundaberg out of 2846 Kanakas there 156 died, nearly as far short of 700. So much for the deportation of the Kanakas to Queensland and their mortality on the plantations. But not only are the charges on these points made by Dr. Paton hasty, but I am compelled from personal observation to say that his charges as to the treatment of the islanders on the plantations are through defective knowledge most unfounded, as I fully showed in my letter to the *Courier* in December last, shortly after my return from Mackay. As to the charge of mortality arising from "long hours of labour, hard work, and changed circumstances of food, clothing, and houses," I found their hours of labour were very fair, and their work, from their own confession, far from heavy. I examined their food, and found it good and plentiful. I went to several of their houses, and found they were in many cases built by the islanders themselves according to their own taste, which they often preferred to those offered by their employers. I could see their clothing to be everywhere decent, and, if too heavy, they might have worn less if they had chosen. As to the charge that they "are buried like dogs," I saw nothing of it, and don't believe it. There was on several of the plantations a house, a kind of hospital, set apart for the sick, where they were kindly attended to, and out of which, when they died, they were taken and decently buried, the missionary performing the ceremony at the grave. As to the charge that it is "the worst kind of slavery known," it is utterly unfounded, a perfect myth. As I stated in my letter in December last, there is not a vestige of it. I found amongst the islanders a general air of contentment, if not placid happiness pervading them all, and I learned that after they had left they were in many cases desirous to return to their old plantations, and even begged to be taken back. Would that be so if the cruellest kind of slavery were crushing them down? I repeat now what I wrote then, that it were well if all the white labourers in the colony were as well off, and as well cared for, both in a temporal and a spiritual sense, as these poor Kanakas. As to their temporal condition, many of them have money laid up in a savings bank, as I saw from the many pigeon-holes in the police-magistrate's offices. As to their moral condition, under our mission for three years back, out of 2800, there are 1800 become pledged total abstainers. Scenes of violence through drink and fighting were common some years back, but since the mission commenced they have very largely disappeared, and there are now very few police cases amongst them at all. As to their spiritual condition, the planters in the Mackay district are not only all well-disposed to the mission, but give it every support in their power. All subscribe to it with, I believe, one exception, and they afford the boys every facility on Sabbath days to attend church, and on week nights the mission school. They have a building rented for them for service on Sabbath, and for instruction four nights in the week in reading, writing, arithmetic, singing, and praying. One planter and his wife instruct weekly 150 Kanakas, having built a schoolroom for them, while the "boys" and "Marys" in that one district alone (being too far for week-night attendance at the headquarters of the mission at Walkerston) in six months subscribed £15 to the mission. The missionary, the Rev. J. M'L. Mackintyre, is a most devoted, zealous, painstaking man, and has been blessed with wonderful success, 155 having been baptized in three years. Now, I ask, could such a state of things exist, if the Kanakas in Queensland were pressed down under "the worst form of slavery" upon the

earth? Why, the very statement of such a thing carries its own refutation with it.

In conclusion, let me say I deeply regret—I deplore that that protest has been made at all, and especially in the terms in which it has been couched. It is, as a whole, hasty, and through defective knowledge, in many respects, without foundation. It is calculated to wound and offend all right-thinking people, and grieve the hearts of most, if not all, Christian men and women in the colony. It is throwing a grave reproach on our highly respected Chief Secretary, who, however much he might wish the commercial prosperity of the country, would never for a moment take a stand likely to encourage a vestige of slavery. It is fitted to give a wrong impression of our whole colony as a Christian country throughout the world. And worst of all, it is certain to afford a handle against missionary efforts amongst the Kanakas on the plantations to those who do not believe in any such work, and to discourage efforts amongst the Christian churches in that direction, and possibly (may God avert it) to destroy our mission in that quarter altogether. I am sure Dr. Paton would be the last man to desire such results, but they are sure to follow unless checked. I repeat it. I do wish with all my heart that that honoured servant of God had thought twice, and more carefully, ere he flung such a protest, so hasty, and in many points so unfounded, respecting poor Queensland's conduct, broadcast over Australia and over the entire civilised earth.—I am, Sir, &c.,
ALEX. C. SMITH,
Convener of the Queensland Presbyterian Heathen Mission Committee, Mowbray-town, East Brisbane, 23rd March."

The Rev. Mr. Brown, Wesleyan minister, writes to the *Bundaberg Mail*, expressing the opinion that Dr. Paton, in his recent deliverance on the black labour question, had been carried away by prejudice. He (Mr. Brown) considers that the labour traffic is amenable to regulation, and advocates the introduction of couples instead of single boys.

In response to a request from the executive of the Bundaberg Workers' Political Association, the Rev. W. Morris, rector of the English Church in Bundaberg, writes to the local papers thus :—

" . . . Before receiving the request, I had read with much amazement Dr. Paton's protest. If one-tenth of the charges brought against Queensland in it were true to-day in respect of Kanaka recruiting and treatment here, every Christian man and woman in the colony would cry out against it. We know how guarded is the recruiting now, and we know how much better fed, clothed, and housed these men are now than they would be on their own islands. Hundreds of them have from £5 to £100 in the banks. There are thousands in the Mother-country not half so well off as these islanders. Week day and Sunday they meet for instruction, singing, and prayer, and many return to their own islands Christian communicants, join the native churches, and make themselves useful there. I have had classes of these men and women thirteen years, and know the astonishing changes that have taken place in many of them. There are some 1400 under Christian instruction in this district, and very many of these are teetotallers. Many who return to their islands again come to Queensland. They would hardly do this were they treated as Dr. Paton represents. Nor is the mortality statement now correct. There is no doubt that almost everywhere the coloured races are dying out. Witness the Maories and the Sandwich Islanders. There is no doubt the changes in climate, food, clothing, &c., cause some deaths here; but medical men know better now how to treat them, and a far less number die. . . . To me, therefore, it does seem best for the Polynesian, and best for the colony, that the labour should be extended for a definite time."

A representative of the *Bundaberg Mail* has interviewed the Rev. Mr. Eustace, of the Kanaka Mission, and he characterises Dr. Paton as a sort of mad enthusiast with a hobby, and his charges, where legitimate, are grossly exaggerated, and are otherwise entirely unfounded, and a base libel on Kanaka morality.

The Rev. W. Faulkner, Primitive Methodist minister, in a letter to the *Bundaberg Mail*, says, *inter alia* :—

"Having been requested by the Workers' Political Organisation of this town to express my "opinions and convictions" *re* Dr. Paton's appeal against the proposed ten years' extension of the Polynesian Labourers Act, with your permission I avail myself of the columns of your paper to respond. In doing so, it must be distinctly understood that I am writing in my individual capacity and not as the representative of the church or denomination with which I am identified.

1. I am quite aware of the fact, and deeply pained by it, that many serious abuses

have been connected with the traffic, and these I most strongly deprecate and condemn; but I accept the assurance of Sir Samuel Griffith that these abuses have been reduced almost to a minimum.

2. My own observations as a resident for eight years in the two principal centres of the sugar industry in Queensland do not confirm the assertions of Dr. Paton respecting the inhuman treatment of the Kanakas on the plantations and their consequent dissatisfaction with their employers and their work. And, for reasons which to my mind are satisfactory, I cannot accept the conclusion that "deception and cruel oppression to the islander" are necessarily connected with this traffic."

DR. PATON'S FACTS.

(*Courier*, April 5).

On Tuesday last reference was made by Mr. Annear in the Legislative Assembly to certain statements in "Hansard" of October 3rd, 1889, which the hon. gentleman took to reflect very seriously on the Rev. Dr. Paton, whose letters in the Press upon the proposed reintroduction of Kanakas have caused much discussion. In course of debate on October 3rd, 1889, Mr. Cowley quoted an article republished by the *Courier* from one of the Melbourne papers, giving the result of certain charges made by Dr. Paton in connection with the Polynesian trade. The article states that in December, 1881, "Mr." Paton published a long letter which contained charges so grave that Captain Bridge, of H.M.S. *Espiegle*, was instructed by Sir Arthur Gordon to investigate them. Three of the principal charges, together with the official report on them, were printed in the paper as follows:—

Dr. Paton's charge (No. 1):—"That a Queensland vessel, with a Government agent on board, sent two lads on shore; that the men called out to a little boy to come to them; that the boy's father held the lad's arm and prevented him, and that the crews then opened fire and killed the natives."

The official report says:—"That these men wished to join a labour vessel, but were prevented by the other natives; that on one of them attempting to reach a boat the natives opened fire and struck the inner boat, whereupon the covering boat fired on the natives."

Dr. Paton's charge (No. 2):—"A labour vessel decoyed a Christian native teacher on board. Word was sent to the young men and boys of the school that their teacher wanted to see them. So soon as 100 were collected the vessel sailed away."

The official report says:—"A native teacher left by a labour vessel, but he went voluntarily. He was not decoyed. Word was not sent to collect the scholars. None were entrapped. There was no such kidnapping incident."

Dr. Paton's charge (No. 3):—"That two tribes that were fighting placed their women and children on a reef. That a labour vessel stole in, got the women and children into the boats, and sailed away, despite the firing of the men and the pleading of the women."

Official report:—"The Revs. Messrs. Watt and Neilson have been long on Tanna, and both say that they never heard of any such thing occurring on that island."

Upon these charges and the reports, a Melbourne paper said that Dr. Paton "appears to combine enthusiasm in a good cause with a perfect genius for scandal-mongering and the imputation of bad motives."

The *Courier* at the time, commenting on the matter, said, "To most of our readers this will appear rather mild censure on an individual who, though a minister of the Gospel, persists in spreading calumnies of which the falsehood has been demonstrated."

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND CORRESPONDENCE.

Guardian, April 20.

In writing about the New Guinea Mission, Bishop Barry goes on to say: "But there is, I fear, a far more serious danger ahead, in the unhappy revival by Queensland of the Kanaka labour traffic from the islands, which will now, no doubt, extend to New Guinea. It is true that the Premier of the Queensland Government promises, and I have no doubt with the utmost sincerity, that the most stringent regulations shall be laid down to prevent all violence, fraud, and injustice towards the natives, both in the islands themselves and on the Queensland plantations. But all who have the slightest

knowledge of the past history and the necessary conditions of the labour traffic will agree with the veteran missionary, the Rev. J. G. Paton, in the sad conviction that regulations, however carefully devised, are but too likely to be ineffective, and in the deep regret that the traffic which, almost by universal consent, was given up as practically an inhuman traffic—almost a slave trade—should be resumed. Queensland, no doubt, must have black labour, if its tropical regions are to be worked. But a supply of such labour could be obtained from Southern India—with positive benefit to that over-populated country—and in that case the British Government would see that all inhumanity and injustice were made impossible. As it is, I have grave fears. I do not know what power is in the hands of Sir W. Macgregor, as the representative of British power in New Guinea, and of the Admiral on the Australian station. But I earnestly trust that their hands may be strengthened for independent action and full protection of the natives. “ALFRED BARRY.”

“The Cloisters, Windsor Castle, Easter Eve, 1892.”

“We hope that Bishop Barry’s letter in another column will be carefully considered by the English Government. If the Kanaka labour traffic in its original form was “almost a slave trade,” it is a shocking thing that the Queensland Legislature should have revived it. At any risk and any cost the Imperial authorities should interfere to prevent the mischiefs which are certain to follow upon this disastrous step. So long as a colony remains under the control of the British Crown it should be made impossible for it to set up slavery even in the most innocent-looking forms and under the prettiest names.”

Guardian, April 27.

KANAKA LABOUR IN QUEENSLAND.

“SIR,—Now that so influential a correspondent as Bishop Barry joins with the Rev. J. G. Paton in stigmatising Kanaka labour in Queensland as “practically an inhuman traffic—almost a slave-trade” (Mr. Paton does without the “almost”), it is really time that North Queenslanders should rise and protest against the employment of such language by responsible persons. In various quarters during the last few years I have met with allusions of this kind, but now that a Bishop and the *Guardian* unite in casting this cruel calumny upon us, I cannot refrain from doing my best to remove the unmerited stigma. And I trust, Sir, that of your fairness you will find room for this letter in your next issue.

I have been living for some few years in London, but Mackay, North Queensland, the centre of the sugar-growing districts, is my home. I settled there early in the “sixties,” and have had personal acquaintance with the South Sea Island labour importation from the beginning of the sugar industry. I have known the planter-employers, the Government Agents who superintended the recruiting of the islanders, the captains of the vessels, the plantation overseers, and the islanders themselves, and may say that I have a full and exact knowledge of all the circumstances of Mr. Paton’s “slave-trade.” Really, Sir, I can hardly keep cool when I hear the employment of Kanakas called “an inhuman traffic.” Speaking from my experience, particularised above, I proclaim in the most earnest and distinct terms that nothing could be further from the truth. I protest vehemently against the minds of English people being poisoned by sensationally worded attacks, unsupported by an atom of evidence.

Bishop Barry’s references to the Kanaka labour trade appear in a letter about the New Guinea Mission, of which the late Rev. A. A. Maclaren was the leader. He is, perhaps, not aware that Mr. Maclaren was the Church of England clergyman in Mackay for some years, and took a deep interest in the welfare of the islanders, who used to attend his church in large numbers. He visited them on the plantations, and was thoroughly satisfied that their condition was good. I knew Mr. Maclaren well, and he has often stayed at my house. I recollect him saying to me once, “These boys are happier here than they would be in their own islands; and they are more amenable to the influence of religious instruction on account of the civilising process to which they have been exposed.”

The islanders were engaged for three years, at the end of which term their wages (£18) were given to them; and they were clothed and fed by their employers. I can show you photographs of the natives taken on their arrival, and at the end of their engagement, so that you may judge if “inhumanity” was their fate when on North Queensland plantations. They were taken back to their islands—if they wished to

go—when their three years were up, and a month afterwards the same men were *always* eager to re-engage when a schooner came along. I knew one boy who re-engaged four times. And, Sir, it is apparent to every globe-trotter who visits the sugar plantations that the Kanakas are well fed, jolly and happy, singing at their work, and roaming about the country during their leisure hours, exempt from the harrowing fear of starvation and murder, which is their normal condition in their islands. Some abuses were proved to have existed in the recruiting of one vessel, and the offenders were severely punished; but to condemn the whole system, as Mr. Paton and Bishop Barry do, is an act which is manifestly unjust.

The Rev. J. Mackintyre, the Presbyterian missionary in Mackay, recently baptized thirty-eight Kanakas out of a congregation of 200. His church is always full to overflowing, and at one of the meetings the boys subscribed £10 to the Mission funds.

Much good work is done by the wives of the planters, one of whom devotes her whole time to educating and Christianising the islanders. Mr. Mackintyre writes:—

“This evident work of Divine grace is not confined to one plantation, but has spread over several, and the extraordinary success may well excite in every Christian heart the deepest gratitude to God.”

At Maryborough there is an equally successful mission. What do you think of all this for Queensland “slaves”? Bishop Barry knows nothing from personal acquaintance of the Kanaka labour, and the visits of Mr. Paton to Queensland were few and brief. But without my vindication, do English men and women think that Queenslanders are so bereft of morality and kindness that they can encourage an “inhuman traffic” in their midst? I think it is hard that we should be considered so much behind other Anglo-Saxon communities, in which the pressure of public opinion would not allow such an abuse to exist for a week; and to make an effort to fight against such an undeserved reputation I write this letter, the length of which please to pardon, considering the importance of my subject.

CHARLES C. RAWSON.

Royal Colonial Institute, Northumberland-avenue,
London, W.C., April 23, 1892.”

Guardian, May 4.

“SIR,—The question whether the labour traffic is or is not legalised slavery is one which touches the conscience of England very nearly; and I therefore feel it my duty to ask you to allow me to state the results of my experience of it.

It should be borne in mind that though attention is called to the question by the recent action of Queensland, which is the largest employer of labour, yet that Fiji, which is a Crown colony, still I believe recruits in the islands, though not so much as formerly, and also that German and French labour vessels recruit for Samoa and New Caledonia. But Queensland is the main source of the trade, and it is of the Queensland labour traffic that I shall mainly speak.

My experience extends over what is nearly the whole field of the labour traffic from the middle of the Solomon Islands, south of the German line at Ysabel on the north, to the middle of the New Hebrides on the south. The rest of the New Hebrides are occupied by the Presbyterian Mission. As to British New Guinea, I understand that Sir William MacGregor, the Commissioner, has forbidden recruiting there.

I can also speak from personal knowledge of many of the captains and Government Agents employed in the trade, and also in my missionary work have observed its effects on the natives *in their own islands*, and know their opinion on the subject. Add to this a very considerable correspondence on matters arising from this traffic with the authorities both at Queensland and Fiji, and with the officers of her Majesty’s navy, and it appears to me that I ought to speak while this great question is being discussed, as I can lay before you a tolerably complete and, I hope, unbiassed account of the facts as they have presented themselves to me.

It may be that in doing so I shall not take quite the same view of the subject as my friend Bishop Barry, or the Rev. J. Paton, whose work I so much respect; but I am sure that they will feel that I do not yield to them in deep interest for natives of the Pacific, and all that tends to their welfare.

The present moment, when Sir Samuel Griffith deems it his duty in face of much opposition to renew the labour traffic, marks a crisis in the history of the islands, and it is our duty to turn that crisis to the best effect. As you point out in your leading

article, England is powerless to prevent this action of a self-governing colony except at the risk of civil war, but she is not powerless to control and guide it, and the strong pressure of public opinion has in past years done much to this end.

Now, Sir, I cannot help feeling that the indiscriminate condemnation of the traffic which has been expressed is likely to do more harm than good. It was true of the traffic in its beginning. It is not true of the traffic as now conducted.

There are abuses, no doubt, connected with the trade, and grave ones, as I hope shortly to point out. But if we notice only the abuses, and shut our eyes to the many reforms which have been effected by the Governments of Queensland and Fiji, if we describe the trade as being now what it was when it undoubtedly caused Bishop Patteson's death, we simply arouse a spirit of distrust in all missionary and philanthropic statement, such as that which is evinced by your correspondent, Mr. Rawson, and by unjust accusation we arouse a spirit of opposition, and debar ourselves from demanding those reforms which might go far to do away with the evil of the traffic.

In the beginning and up to the time of Bishop Patteson's death the labour trade was most surely unmitigated slavery. Men were kidnapped by every form of deceit and violence. They were taken they knew not whither. They were kept for an indefinite time. No news of those who died came back to their friends. If they made a disturbance on board they were shot down, as in the famous case of the *Carl*.

The white name of "Blackbird-catching," and the native name of "Stealing Ships," which still remains, shows what opinion both sides alike formed on the subject.

But such atrocities as those on the *Carl* and the death of the Bishop awoke public conscience. The Imperial Government passed an Act which is still in force over British subjects in the Pacific. The Governments of Queensland and Fiji enacted laws which regulated and controlled the vessels employed in the trade, and which enforced much salutary care for the labourers or the planters who employed them. These laws have gradually been made stricter as time went on.

Each labour vessel is made to carry an agent of the Government who is responsible for the regulations being carried out. He sees that the recruits are properly fed and cared for on board. When they arrive, an immigration officer receives them, assigns them to their masters, who sign a bond to return them after three years' service. Their rations are provided on almost too lavish a scale, at least in regard to meat, to which they are unaccustomed. Hospitals are provided in each district at the expense of the planters. When the labourer is paid off, a Government officer sees that he gets his money's worth, and that he is returned to his own home.

Such are the regulations, and it seems to me an abuse of words to call such a system "slavery," or inhuman.

In the islands themselves there may be some cases in which an influential man has compelled some of his followers to recruit that he may get the things which are given to the friends of each recruit. Often I have been told that a man has been stolen, and have found on inquiry that this meant that his friends had not received the "bounty," if I may so explain it.

But in the vast majority of cases the recruits go of their own free will. Life is dull, food is monotonous, property is scarce in the islands, and the sight of a returned labourer's well-filled box, his description of the food, sometimes of the wonders of Queensland, and the hopes of a similar box, and the glory of landing in a brand-new suit of European clothes, and then getting rid of the contents of the box by lavish gifts, often prove irresistible to the younger minds. Many of the men who now enlist do so not only for a particular port, but for a named plantation at that port.

I have, indeed, heard of cases of ill-treatment in Fiji and Queensland, but the number of men who recruit and who take friends with them show that there is not enough to be deterrent. Add to this that the labour ships are the travelling ships of the islands, that from them mostly are derived the axes with which they work, the gaudy calicoes which they delight in, and, above all, the tobacco which they, with the majority of mankind, enjoy, and you will readily understand that the labour trade is not wholly looked on with disfavour by the islanders.

And now let me put, as fairly and truly as I can, the *per contra*.

First and foremost—Numbers.

The population of the islands is by no means an unlimited one. Native agriculture requires large spaces of ground, and the villages lie far apart. The population of the wilder islands is kept in check by their own feuds and infanticide; and now European diseases have greatly increased the death-rate.

There is *not* a superabundant supply of men to draw on; and even from their own point of view, Queensland will be killing the goose with the egg if they do not remember this. I have known several cases where vessels have been fired on simply because the people were tired of the ceaseless worry of the demand.

The same reason forbids their taking too many men of marrying age. And the incessant demand leads to one abuse which we have always fought against—the taking of boys under age. There is a strict regulation on this point, but the elasticity of a recruiting sergeant's conscience cannot compare with that of a Queensland Agent on this subject. And besides this, lads are often taken without their parents' consent, and are refused when they are demanded back. A most temperate letter from the people at Florida, which I forwarded to the Admiral, shows that this is a real grievance, and we have found it play havoc with the first classes in our schools.

2. *Arms, Ammunition, and Spirits.*—These, especially the two former, were largely given in payment to the friends of the labourer who embarked, and in old days each man bore home in triumph a Snider rifle and 300 rounds of ball cartridge, to the great detriment of the peace. I am glad to say this has been stopped, and the Queensland regulations are very strict, and are enforced. Englishmen growl, especially the traders, and say they are handicapped by foreign competition, but I hope nothing will induce the Government to relax these rules.

3. *Recruiting of Women.*—This is the great vice of the trade. The regulations are not sufficiently strict on this subject, and are not enforced with sufficient determination. No unmarried girl should be taken at all; indeed, girls are betrothed so early that it would be difficult to find one. And no married couple should be taken unless it has been ascertained from the people of the village that there is no objection to the woman going, and that she really is the wife of the man who goes with her. The labour vessel is now the handiest means of elopement. A man recruits over night, and tells the captain that his wife will be on the rocks the next morning. In the grey dawn a woman is discerned on the beach, the boat goes in, no questions are asked, and the deserted husband is left to make an "unprovoked" attack on the next boat that comes in. I can quote instance after instance where this has been the cause of bloodshed.

4. *Captains.*—Until lately captains were paid head money on each labourer obtained. Now they are paid high wages, but none the less does their employment depend on the rapidity with which they fill their ship.

5. *Labour Agents.*—I have known many of these men, and found some of them men of high character and anxious to do their duty. But too often they are picked up when all other trades have failed.

But they have one and all told me that the attempt to do their duty has led to great friction, and it needs an exceptional man to stand the strain of an incessant contest for a faithful fulfilment of the law. "I look upon you, sir, as my natural enemy," said a captain to his agent one day. *E vino veritas!* Many shut their eyes to abuses—a few wilfully abet.

6. *Character of the returned labourer.*—He is a much-abused person, and in many cases justly. Very often he has learnt all the evil and none of the good of civilisation. In many cases he returns a confirmed blackguard, knowing enough English to swear withal, a bully, and the prime mover in mischief and outrage.

But there are many bright exceptions, and I think, on the whole, they are increasing. Many have been reached by such agencies as those so justly praised by Mr. Rawson. Ministers of religion, managers of stations, and, above all in point of influence, ladies have worked enthusiastically with and for them. One or two of our most flourishing stations have been started by men who have been taught in Queensland. Shortly before I left I received a petition from twenty-five natives of Tanna who had been baptised, asking me to care for them. I forwarded this letter to the Presbyterian Synod in whose sphere Tanna lies, and am glad to hear that they are being cared for.

Such, Sir, is the labour trade as I have experienced it.

I have said enough to show that, though it is not the slavery it is described as being, and though the Government have tried, to a large extent, to do their duty, yet that there are serious abuses connected with it. The question is, whether these abuses are so bad that they outweigh the certain amount of good, or whether they can be so met as to leave the trade one that Englishmen need not be ashamed of. I think this is possible. Do what we will we cannot keep those islands wrapped up in cotton-wool. There is evil in the world, and in some form or another they will come in.

contact with it. Our duty is to try and strengthen them morally and physically, that they may be able to resist it. No one can say that, *per se*, it is a bad thing for a young fellow to leave his own narrow island home, learn to work steadily, and obtain what he wants by that work. We have to take care—(1) that he knows what he is doing; (2) that he is properly taken care of; (3) that some effort is made to raise him in the social scale by education and by teaching him Christianity.

I think that the Government of Queensland can do a great deal in this way, and now is their chance and ours. How?—

a. By seeing that getting the labour is a matter of gain to no man. The work ought to be done in their own vessels, with a superior man in charge, and where possible depôts should be formed at convenient places to avoid the long voyages to which recruits are now subject.

b. Every possible care should be taken not to recruit persons under age, or without the consent of their parents. No woman should be taken without her husband, and pains should be taken to ascertain that he is the real one.

c. Far stricter discipline should be maintained, and could be maintained, in Government vessels over the crews of the ships when at anchor: crying evils have resulted from a lack of this.

d. A fixed number only should be recruited every year, to avoid the drain on the islands, and care should be taken that the able-bodied men should be encouraged to return.

e. Greater facilities should be given for teaching the labourers. Secular education might be undertaken by the Government, and small grants in aid of those who work among them would be a great help in providing accommodation for the crowds who come to the voluntary teachers.

f. Greater care should be taken of the women on plantations. They are relatively few in number, the men are many, and the temptations are great.

g. The Colonial Governments, aided by the Imperial Government, should endeavour to induce other nations to make more stringent regulations for their own subjects.

These restrictions, if faithfully enforced, would go far to remedy the abuses now existing, and with them I think the traffic might be worked to the benefit of the islands and of Queensland. She would then have at her doors a nursery of labourers for her work whom it was her interest to foster and protect. And in turn she would gradually give them civilisation and some education. But if the incessant demand for men is to go on unchecked, as it did a few years ago, the islands will be utterly unable to withstand the strain; bitterness will be engendered by a demand which will be felt to be oppressive, and in no distant future Queensland will be face to face with the same labour difficulty, and will find that she has destroyed the source of her prosperity in her eagerness unduly to increase it.

J. R. SELWYN, late Bishop of Melanesia.

Langhurst, Witley, Godalming."

Times, May 9.

"As to the importation of Kanaka labour, it is surely possible to conduct it under regulations similar to those which have been found effective in the case of Indian coolies. But it ought to be the business of the Imperial Government to see that these regulations were made and were effectually carried out."

Times, May 16.

"The news that the Governor of Queensland, Sir Henry Norman, has given the Royal Assent to an Act for renewing the importation of Kanaka labour into the colony has given rise to some comment in this country, in Parliament, and in the public Press. The Act has been vigorously denounced as being nothing else than a renewal of the slave trade, and as leading necessarily to a repetition of the very grave abuses with which the recruiting of Kanaka labourers was attended in bygone days. How far these remarks and these fears are likely to be justified by the event may be judged by an important letter which we publish this morning from Sir James Garrick, the Agent-General for Queensland. The thing aimed at by the Act is admittedly beneficial to the colony. In Northern Queensland the cultivation of sugar is one of the most important industries, and it is one which cannot be carried on without such help as the Act is intended to give. Sir Samuel Griffith, the Queensland Premier, in his Manifesto of February 13, puts the case very clearly thus far. Either the sugar mills

will be closed, and the products of the land diminished, or some means must be taken to supply the planters and farmers with labourers suitable for the work. Of course, considerations such as these, however well deserving of attention in themselves, do not exhaust the arguments applicable to the case. If there were any reasonable chance of a repetition of the old horrors of the labour traffic, if recruits were again to be kidnapped and taken forcibly on board the labour vessels, or to be seduced by false pretences to bind themselves to a compact, the drift of which they did not understand, and to be ill-used afterwards on their arrival in the Colony, and to be done to death by excessive and overtaxing work, the plea for the Act on economical grounds would carry no weight. Better a thousand times that the Queensland sugar industry should come to a standstill, that the mills should be closed and the sugar estates left uncultivated, than that the voyage of another *Hopeful* should be made under the British flag, and that another record of "deceit, cruel treachery, deliberate kidnapping, and cold-blooded murders"—we quote from the report of the Commission of 1885—"should be added to the black list of atrocities consequent on the labour traffic in old days."

But of this, happily, there is no prospect, and, we believe, no possibility. The report of the Commission, and the shocking disclosures which it brought to light, had the result which they might have been expected to produce. The public conscience was awakened, and measures were promptly taken to guard against the recurrence of outrages so disgraceful to all who had been concerned in them, or had suffered them to go on unchecked. The labour traffic was placed at once under very stringent regulations. No ships were permitted to be engaged in it without special Governmental licence. Their officers and their recruiting agents had to be approved by the Government, and each ship carried a Government agent charged with the duty of seeing that all labour engagements were voluntarily entered into, and with full knowledge of what they meant, and that the general rules imposed to prevent abuses had full effect given to them. Provision was also made for the proper treatment of the labourers during the period of their engagement, and on these new terms the labour traffic was sanctioned for five years more until the close of 1890. During that time no serious abuses were brought to light, and the traffic was so conducted as to be beneficial to all parties, to the planters whom it supplied with capable and willing hands, and to the labourers to whom it brought the legitimate and well-earned reward of their very useful work. Under the Act now passed these regulations will be in force, and new and more stringent ones will be added, so firm is the resolve of the Queensland Government to take every possible precaution against the occasional and exceptional defects found in the working of the former rules. The opposition to the Act in Queensland does not seem to be motivated by any regard to the interests of the labourers whose introduction the Act is to facilitate. Those who dislike the Act are no less strong in their dislike to the introduction of European labour. It is, Sir Samuel Griffith says, in the manifesto to which we have already referred, the hostility of working men who will neither work themselves nor allow others to do so. By other classes in the Colony the manifesto has been generally approved, and the Bill, which has now become law, has had a ready welcome accorded to it. Sir Samuel Griffith, it must be remembered, is a somewhat recent convert to the policy which the Act embodies. No one was more forward in condemning the abuses of the labour traffic, or more determined that an effective check should be found for them. His attitude thus far is unchanged. But he has been forced to recognise the imperative need to the Colony of a further supply of labour, and he is convinced that the thing can be done with no fear that abuses will be repeated, which he would be the last to sanction or to tolerate.

Sir James Garrick's letter is addressed chiefly to the opponents of the Act in this country. He assures them that the Queensland Government is in earnest in its resolve to prevent any infringement of the very strict rules under which the renewed labour traffic is to be conducted. That his letter, replete as it is with proofs of what he asserts, will carry conviction to all minds is not likely. Among those to whom he writes are some who have not scrupled to term the Act a revival of the slave trade, and whose language shows that they have not cared to inform themselves of the wide difference between the way in which the labour traffic has been carried on before 1885 and since. Such men as these will remain impervious to argument. Their use will be that they may be trusted to watch jealously over the operation of the Act, and to leave no stone unturned to make sure that the Queensland Government does all

that it undertakes to do. If abuses there still are, they will not suffer them to pass without notice, and they will probably report a good many instances of the sort not deserving much credit, and not carrying conviction to any minds less prejudiced than their own. The objections urged against the Act by the white labourers in Queensland will also find an echo in this country. There are plenty among our working classes who are as much resolved as any Queensland labourer can be "neither to work themselves nor to allow others to do so." The more useful the Act proves the more loud will be their outcry against it. To these, again, Sir James Garrick's letter will be ineffective; or, rather, the more credit they give to it the more certainly will they take it as strengthening their case. But, whatever the necessity for the Act or for some measure adapted for the same ends, it is impossible to deny that the Government which has adopted it has incurred thereby a very grave responsibility and is bound to give effect to its promises as to the way in which the labour traffic shall be carried on, and to make sure that the engagements freely made between the planters and the labourers shall be observed. We have no doubt that it will find means to do all that it has undertaken to do."

Times, May 16.

POLYNESIAN LABOUR IN QUEENSLAND.

"SIR,—Since the issue of Sir Samuel Griffith's important manifesto on the necessity of reintroducing Polynesian labour into Queensland for the cultivation of sugar, much criticism has been evoked for and against its employment both in Australia and here. Some of the critics have expressed themselves unfavourably to it, on the grounds of its demoralizing effect to the colonists and of the utter impossibility of recruiting the labourers in the South Sea Islands without bloodshed and cruelty; others again—like Mr. C. C. Rawson, in his admirable letter to the *Guardian*—have clearly shown that the labourers who have been employed on the Queensland plantations have been humanely treated, and have derived the benefits of Christianity, which they have imparted to their fellow countrymen on their return to their islands. To those who have entered the lists in Australia against the reintroduction of this labour, I need not here trouble myself to reply, but confine my remarks to those who are in this country, and who may not be so familiar with this subject. It would appear that the principal objection to the Kanaka immigration to Queensland is not that the labourers are improperly or unkindly treated while in the colony, of which, I believe, there are few instances, but rather the manner in which they are recruited and brought there. The regulations for the conduct of this immigration require that all ships intended to carry these islanders shall be licensed, and the officers of the ship and the agent of the intending employer shall be approved by the Government. The master or owner of the ship has to enter into a bond in the sum of £500 for the return of the islanders to their native villages on their respective islands. An agent appointed and paid by the Government is on board to see that all islanders have voluntarily engaged themselves and have entered into their agreements with a full knowledge and understanding of their nature and conditions, and generally to see that the regulations are carried out. The vessels are properly found with medicine and necessaries, and overcrowding is provided against. While employed in Queensland the labourers' dietary is ample, the housing sufficient, and hospitals are provided.

These, briefly, are the leading regulations for recruiting the labourers, and which, I think, the strongest opponent of Polynesian labour cannot but admit are stringent. It appears to me that the following observation of Bishop Selwyn, in his letter to the *Guardian* of May 4, is a just one:—"Such are the regulations, and it seems to me an abuse of words to call such a system 'slavery' or 'inhuman.'" The suggestions of Bishop Selwyn in that excellent letter for further improvements in the recruiting are, I consider, very valuable, and I have sent a copy of the letter officially to my Government, and I have no doubt they will give due weight to the opinions of one so thoroughly acquainted with the South Sea Islanders as the late Bishop of Melanesia.

I am fully aware it may be stated that the atrocities with respect to the islanders by the ship *Hopeful*, and some other vessels, were committed while these regulations were in force, and would tend to show that the regulations without effective administration are inadequate. That the Queensland Government were earnest in their desire to stringently administer the law, and punish those who wilfully violated it, is shown in the prosecution of the officers and agent of the *Hopeful*. These abuses led to the

appointment of a commission, which reported in April, 1885. This inquiry and the prosecutions referred to have enforced two lessons—one upon the Government for the necessity of stricter administration, the other upon those engaged in the recruiting service for an honest discharge of their duties, with the knowledge that any infringement of the regulations would be punished. The fruits of these lessons appear in the fact that I know of no serious abuses since that inquiry and report, which is now more than seven years ago. It has been asserted that the passing of the Act in 1885 for the discontinuance of the licences to recruit after 1890 was in consequence of the abuses which had been committed. This is scarcely accurate. The principal reason given for the restriction was a political one founded on the objection to servile or coloured labour of any kind, and it was the opinion of the then Government that before the limit of five years had expired some other system of agriculture would be established by which plantations would be subdivided, leased, and sold to farmers who would employ white labour and sell their cane to central mills. This, however, has not eventuated as anticipated by Sir Samuel Griffith, and he has therefore extended the time by a new Act in order to avert the ruin of the sugar industry.

Under this Act the Queensland Government have determined to make still more stringent regulations, and it was only yesterday a telegram which I had received from my Government was read in the House of Commons by Baron H. de Worms, when answering a question put to him by Mr. Winterbotham. It is so important, as showing the just appreciation of the Queensland Government of the difficulties in dealing with this question, that I here give it in full:—"Governor of Queensland out of reach of telegraphic communication. Act has been assented; merely repeals prohibition of issue of licences after ninety. Present regulations remain in force until amended; revised regulations still more stringent ready, will be issued immediately on Governor's return. Government fully recognize necessity stringent regulations, firmly determined to prevent infringement. Many return islanders awaiting passage to islands. It is proposed to issue recruiting licences under conditions of revised regulations to ships taking them. Sugar industry already shows great revival; matter of importance to afford every facility for supply of labour as soon as possible."

The Queensland Government being thus fully alive to its responsibility, and having stated its firm determination to prevent any infringement of the regulations, the people of England may rest assured—and for my part I see no reason for doubting the sincerity of my Government's assurance any more than for doubting an assurance of Her Majesty's Government that a breach of any special public Act here shall be punished in the manner provided by that Act—that the revised regulations will be fearlessly and rigidly enforced, and that the safeguards which will hedge around this recruiting will be such as to bear the broad light of public opinion, and render it as free from evil as the immigration of coolies from India to our Crown colonies.

In concluding this letter allow me to give you two short extracts from the Queensland "Hansard" of April 1, 1892, from the speech of Mr. Dalrymple, the member for Mackay, in which he says: "At the end of 1893 10,000 islanders are supposed to be returned to their islands;" and, later on, "So far as the Polynesians themselves are concerned, their coming to Queensland has by no means been a very disastrous thing for themselves, seeing that to the credit of 3400 Kanakas there is the sum of £20,000 in the Government Savings Bank."

I also wish to give you from the same "Hansard" an extract from the speech of Mr. Adams, the member for Bundaberg:—

I find that not two years ago a lady respected by everybody in my electorate and in the whole district, a lady respected and admired by every hon. member for the work she has done among the Polynesians—I allude to Miss Young, of Fairymead, who is now a missionary in China—that a meeting was held in the Victoria-hall, Bundaberg, to bid her farewell, and there were no less than 722 islanders able to recite portions of Scripture, and able to chant many of the hymns they were taught. I hold in my hand the report of the Queensland Kanaka Mission for 1891, and here I find this information:—

"Good news has also reached us from missionaries in the islands, who speak highly of some of the Christian boys. Several of their own accord have begun classes for their countrymen on returning from Queensland.

"I am, Sir, yours obediently, JAMES F. GARRICK, Agent-Genl. for Queensland.
"Queensland Government Office, Westminster-chambers, 1, Victoria-st., May 13th."

Pall Mall Gazette, May 6.

"It is to Sir Samuel Griffith that we owe the prevention of the recruiting scandals, and we cannot believe that he will not have taken stringent measures to preserve this portion of his policy intact."

Pall Mall Gazette, May 16.

[Abridged.]

"A WORD OF WARNING TO 'ENGLISH ENGLISHMEN.'"

"The Opposition leaders, it is said this morning—we do not know with what authority—are being pressed to take up the agitation against the Act passed by the Queensland Parliament, and sanctioned by the Crown, for the continuation of the labour traffic with Polynesia. We wonder what Lord Carrington will think of this suggested action on the part of his friends? According to his now famous speech at the Colston Banquet, it was the Tory party who maintained "the divine right of English Englishmen to rule the Empire," and thereby "implied a racial inferiority in their brethren of the same blood, simply because they live across the broad blue sea." And it was the present wicked Government of English Englishmen which "could not trust the Englishmen who have gone out there to live among the native races, as they are firmly convinced that the natives would be unfairly treated and governed on the 'damned nigger' principle." We do not know whether the leaders of the Opposition will adopt the suggestion. In any case we hope that the spirit of Lord Carrington's words will be so far observed as that English critics should try and think the best and not the worst of their colonial brothers; and to this end it is much to be wished that certain misrepresentations on the subject should not obtain further currency. In the first place, it is hardly accurate to speak of the "*reintroduction* of slavery" at all. What has happened is this:—In 1885 Sir Samuel Griffith enacted that after 1890 no fresh licences for the importation of Kanakas should be issued. He has now repealed that prohibition for a further period of years. It is not, therefore, a new system which is being introduced; nor is it the reintroduction of the old system which prevailed before 1885. It is a continuation of the system which has existed from 1885 onwards. And this brings us to the second misrepresentation. To speak of Sir Samuel Griffith's policy as one of "legalised slavery," and to tar it with the brush of the old scandals, is to ignore the restrictions and regulations under which the traffic has, since the exposure of those scandals, been carried on."

Professor Drummond was interviewed by the *Pall Mall*, and spoke favourably, on the whole, and hopefully. One paragraph is appended:—

"When the relations between employer and employed are perfect *at home*, it will be time to use the moral argument as final against the Kanaka exodus to Queensland. The world must go on. The labour markets must adjust themselves. If it is inevitable that this human stream from the Pacific should continue to discharge itself upon Australian soil, one very practical thing remains for those who have raised their voices against it—to turn every energy to secure henceforth the righteous fulfilment of the conditions under which the Kanaka is engaged, and especially to ameliorate his lot, and give to it that educational and moral value which humanity and Christianity demand."

Daily Chronicle, May 9.

An article mixing up Separation and coloured labour concludes thus:—"In America democracy paid dearly with its blood for trying to work slave and free labour in the same group of States, and finally it had to insist that if coloured labour must be employed, it must have the same free civic status as white labour. But this is precisely what the Separatists of North Queensland will not (even if pressed by the conciliatory Central Queenslanders) give to the imported Polynesian labourer. During a term of years he must work for a small fixed wage, without being free to dispose of his labour as he pleases. He has no vote like the white labourer. He and his fellows must live without home or family ties, subject to or dependent on the will and caprice of masters and overseers. When he is no longer of any use, or cannot be cajoled into staying after his indenture ends, he is 'dumped' down anywhere in Polynesia, possibly far from his home and amidst a hostile tribe, who cook and eat him."

After an interval of nine days, the *Chronicle* adopts a more moderate tone.

"We cannot fairly prohibit Queensland from exercising the power we have conceded to her, merely because her exercise of it is disagreeable or dishonouring to us. The temptation to import servile labour to do work for as many pence as free labour would charge shillings, if it took the work on hand at all, is very strong. When it is added

that by this means it is thought that ruined sugar estates can be made to yield a profit, we can easily see why the Legislature of the Colony, to which these estates will yield revenue, has succumbed to the wiles of the planter, and given him leave to carry on the old "blackbird trade" once more. There is a great deal of human nature in Queensland, as there is everywhere, and unless we are prepared to suspend her Constitution, as Lord Melbourne did that of Jamaica once, over her treatment of indentured black labour, we had better let her Polynesian Labour Act severely alone."

Daily News, May 14.

"The answer of Baron de Worms to Mr. Winterbotham's question last night will revive the feeling of apprehension which was created by his reply to Mr. Smith last week. It is quite evident that the Government have consented to the revival in Queensland of the traffic in South Sea Islanders, which was only practically discontinued last year. Mr. Samuel Smith described it as really the "revival of the Slave Trade under our flag." This is not too strong a description of the trade as it was some years ago. Year after year attention was called in our columns to the cruelties and iniquities which were perpetrated in the South Seas, and in 1885 a Royal Commission fully investigated the subject, and reported that the traffic was accompanied with every circumstance of deception and cruelty. The Commissioners told the story of more than one of the slave ships, and said that the number of lives sacrificed in what they chose to call the recruiting, but which should be called the kidnapping, can never be accurately known. The trade was then put under far stricter regulations, and exactly similar assurances to those which Baron de Worms repeated yesterday were given then as to the complete sufficiency of the regulations. These assurances proved false before, and they will prove false again. The scandals of the traffic became so bad that it was resolved not to issue any more licences after the end of 1890. Now the Queensland Legislature—pushed to do so probably by the apparent sanction given at home to the demand of the planters for separation—have consented to renew the issue of the licences, and a trade which our cruisers would suppress at once if it were carried on in Arab dhows from the coast of Africa will be revived under an Act to which the present Government has advised the Queen to give her consent."

Globe, May 14.

[Second Attack.]

KANAKAS OR COOLIES.

"We are disposed to agree with Mr. Winterbotham in regretting the speed with which the Royal Assent has been given to the Bill permitting the importation of Kanaka labour into Queensland. Baron H. de Worms has somehow satisfied himself that there is no danger of a revival of the horrible practices which formerly resulted from this system. There are to be "stringent regulations" for the prevention of kidnapping and other accompaniments of the South Sea slave trade. That looks all very well, but regulations, however satisfactory in themselves, are of no earthly use unless there is a force somewhere to insure their strict observance, and we do not perceive any force of that kind in the case of Queensland. The planters in the north of the colony want not only cheap labour—a Kanaka gets 4d. *per diem* when he receives anything—but a full supply of an entirely subservient sort, with no rights or privileges, or Government protection. These being their requirements, they set their faces against Indian coolie labour, which is not only rather more expensive than Kanaka, but has secured to it such governing conditions as effectually safeguard it from being converted into slavery. It affords us much satisfaction to see that Mr. Playford, the Premier of South Australia, has just given utterance to precisely the same views that we lately expressed about the two kinds of imported labour. South Australia has little, if any, personal interest in the matter; Mr. Playford may therefore be accepted as a competent witness. And what is his testimony? "Polynesian labourers imported from the South Sea Islands into Queensland are," he avers, "practically slaves." Not only, either, are they slaves after reaching the colony, but they are often snatched away from their homes by kidnapping skippers on the pretence that they volunteered for emigration to Queensland. It can only be inferred, therefore, from the vehement opposition offered by the Queensland planters to the importation of coolies that they give the preference to Kanakas because of the greater ease with which these miserable islanders can be reduced to a condition of downright slavery."

Globe, May 16.

"KANAKAS OR COOLIES."

SIR,—There is an astounding assertion in this evening's *Globe*, in its article on "Kanakas or Coolies," that "there is vehement opposition offered by the Queensland planters" to coolies. This assertion is entirely unfounded, as the planters never had the chance of importing them. The planters, in the meantime, were reduced to using the few remaining "Kanakas" for the short period of their unexpired agreements only—and the sugar industry, involving the loss of five millions sterling, and the dismissal of 20,000 or 30,000 white (superior) labourers—was just about to be extinguished altogether—when the Queensland Government changed its mind, and permitted the continuation of Kanaka importation (under already existing rules and conditions), with, however, further stringent regulations; but now that the main point has been conceded (the conditional importation of black labour) there should be no difficulty in inducing the Queensland Government to permit the introduction of coolies into Queensland, under the auspices and protection of the Indian Government, in the same way as proposed by the Premier of South Australia, and I trust the Queensland Government will be petitioned to that effect without delay.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

The Gresham Club, London, E.C., May 14."

A PLANTER.

The Paris Temps, May 4.

"If there is a country which thinks itself entitled to invoke with pride long traditions of active beneficence, it is England. The public complacently parade the great names of Wilberforce, Buxton, and so many others. They are particularly strict, not to say intractable, towards the faults they readily attribute to other nations. Yet it is England who is on the eve of committing, or allowing in her name to be committed, one of the most serious scandals which have ever sullied the reputation of mankind in our time. . . . When material interests conflict with the most elementary notions of humanity it is easy to foresee which will prevail."

Mr. Labouchere in *Truth*, May 14.

"I learn from Reuter that the "Melbourne Trades Council has resolved to appeal to Queen Victoria to "veto" the Queensland Bill authorising the introduction of Kanaka labourers (*i.e.*, slaves) into that colony. Well, I do not suppose that "Queen Victoria" is at all likely to veto the Bill. But, if there ever was a case in which the Home Government might interfere with some show of reason in the affairs of a colony, it is in the case of Polynesian kidnapping, because our Navy is expected to hold the candle to the Queenslanders' crime and "punish" (*i.e.*, burn the crops and village of) the Kanaka when he most properly (as I think), being outraged in his tenderest feelings, kills, roasts (or boils), and eats the offending Queenslanders."

The Speaker, April 30.

SLAVE-TRADING IN THE QUEEN'S NAME.

[Abridged.]

"A Bill has just been passed by the Queensland Parliament, and, for all we know, has ere now received the assent of the Governor of the Colony as the representative of the Queen, which authorises the renewal for ten years of what is euphemistically termed the recruiting of Polynesian labourers for the North Queensland sugar plantations. In plain English, the Legislature of the Colony has approved a proposal of the Ministry for the temporary resumption of the trade in Polynesian coolies, which, since the end of last year, has been prohibited by law. Not to mince matters, this particular form of the traffic has in the past been attended with circumstances of crime, cruelty, and disregard of the natural rights of its unhappy victims, scarcely less atrocious than those which characterised the old African slave trade; and this being the case, the people of Great Britain surely ought to have something to say against the renewal of so detestable a system with the Queen's sanction and under the British flag.

The new law professes to contain "adequate provisions for preventing abuses in the introduction of the Kanaka labourers, and for preventing them from entering into competition with white labourers in other occupations."—These last stipulations have been introduced to appease the Trade Unions and other labour organisations of the

Colony, which, while they are opposed to the employment of white labour on the sugar plantations, have regarded the proposal for importing Polynesians with much jealousy and hostility. The Kanakas are to be brought in, like so many beasts of burthen, to do work that white men will not or cannot do; they are to be carefully debarred from qualifying themselves for any other or better work. What is a scheme of this kind but a proposal for the establishment of slavery? The limitation of ten years imposed on the resumption of the trade is illusory. A limitation was imposed before, and has been overruled. What guarantee is there that ten years hence the Queensland sugar-planters and the Legislature may not find the supply of Pacific labour more necessary than ever? That the trade is productive of fearful evils for the islanders, alike for those who are "indentured," and for those who remain in their native haunts, is attested by the experience of the past twenty years. Sir Samuel Griffith knows perfectly well that its effective regulation is impossible. Not all the efforts of the powerful Government of India can keep the coolie traffic altogether free from abuses. How is it possible that the ignorant, uncivilised Pacific Islanders should be able to do for themselves what the Viceregal authorities find it almost impossible to do for the Hindoo ryot? To the Queenslanders the welfare of a parcel of wild Polynesians may be a trivial consideration in comparison with the prosperity of their sugar plantations; but for the people of this country, who, during the present century, have made enormous sacrifices for the suppression of slavery, the question ought to wear a very different aspect. Perhaps it is too late in the day to call for the vetoing of the new Kanaka Labour Law by the Home Government. It is not too late, however, to send out strict instructions to Her Majesty's Commissioner in the Western Pacific to adopt energetic measures for the protection of the native population within his jurisdiction; and, if no stronger step is practicable, such instructions ought to be despatched without a moment's delay."

The Speaker, May 7.

"SIR,—I trust that you will allow an old Queenslander, knowing something of the conditions of coloured labour on the sugar plantations of the north, to say a few words in rejoinder to the article in your last issue—"Slave-Trading in the Queen's Name." There appears to be a desire in some quarters to refer to the Kanaka labour in highly sensational language. Queenslanders are not a nation of "slave-drivers," and there is no reason why the London weekly journals should make the reading public believe that the term is properly applied.

You are incorrect in suggesting that the Colonial Act of 1880 was the first legislation passed regulating the engagement of Polynesians; two Imperial Acts, bearing date 1872 and 1875 (Pacific Islanders' Protection Acts), created the office of High Commissioner, and laid down very stringent rules against kidnapping. Four Acts were passed in Queensland—1880, 1884, 1885, and 1886—drawn in the interests of the islanders. It has been the aim of the Governments of the colony, and the people, to keep the labour trade quite free from abuses, and it is hard that we should be called "slave-traders" for our pains.

The Commission of 1885 showed that faults had existed in the recruiting operations of a few of the schooners; but these cases were most certainly exceptions. Each vessel had on board a Government Agent, a responsible person nominated by the Governor, to supervise the recruiting. This official was quite independent of the captain and owners of the vessel, and had power to stop the engagement of the islanders if the conduct of the recruiter was deemed by him improper.

On arrival at port the islanders were indentured to employers to work for three years—on sugar plantations—at a salary of £6 per annum. Their employers were bound to provide them with fixed quantities of bread, beef, sugar, tea, potatoes, tobacco, salt, and soap (a bountiful list for "slaves"!); and at the expiration of the term of service the islanders were shipped back to the islands, and the villages on the islands, whence they came. No one can deny that the condition of the Polynesians on the Queensland plantations was most prosperous and happy; they were well fed, well clothed, and in their leisure hours roamed about the country as jolly as sandboys. This is not an *ex parte* statement. The Rev. A. A. Maclaren, the Anglican clergyman to whom Bishop Barry referred lately when he called the Labour Trade "an inhuman traffic," was stationed for years in Mackay. He once said, "How much better off these boys are here than they would be on their own islands." Many of the planters and their wives carry on active educational and religious work amongst the islanders.

If any of your readers desire to judge between us, let them apply for information to the Queensland clergy as to the conditions of the labour traffic. Surely this is fair? I referred to Bishop Barry, who, I believe, never was within 1,000 miles of the Queensland sugar plantations. Now I turn to Dr. Saumarez Smith, Dr. Barry's successor as Primate of Australia. He has just been on a tour through North Queensland, and last Saturday's cablegrams brought news that, after examining into the question, he was not disposed to object to Kanaka labour if the regulations were properly attended to.

I have one other point to raise, an important one. I read suggestions that orders should be sent by the Imperial Government to the captains of the men-of-war on the Australian station (in your article you point to the authority who already has jurisdiction, the High Commissioner) to closely scrutinise the enlistment of the islanders, and to "adopt energetic measures," &c., &c. Now surely this kind of writing proceeds from ignorance of the circumstances under which the reintroduction of coloured labour into Queensland has been decided upon. Sir Samuel Griffith has pledged himself and his Government to adopt thorough and efficacious measures to safeguard the rights of the labourers; and the people of Queensland, by their all but unanimous approval of the policy, are bound to see that their Administration do their duty in this respect. We in Queensland are a democratic community not, I think, behind the editor of the *Speaker* and his readers in humanity and honour. The credit of the Colony is at stake concerning this question, and we don't need, and don't at all like, these unjust allusions to "Slave-trading," and threats to set the men-of-war and the High Commissioner after us.—Yours obediently,

J. TROUBRIDGE CRITCHELL.

Royal Colonial Institute, Northumberland-avenue, London, W.C., May 3, 1892."

Graphic, May 14.

"Everyone who desires to know what is really meant by Kanaka labour in Queensland ought to read a pamphlet on the subject by Dr. John G. Paton, missionary to the New Hebrides. It consists of what Mr. Paton calls a "protest," and of a correspondence which has passed between him and Sir Samuel Griffith. Documents presenting more terrible facts have seldom been submitted to the British public. Dr. Paton knows what he is writing about, for among the victims of the Kanaka labour traffic are the people amidst whom he lives [Dr. Paton left the islands about 1881, and has since resided in Australia.—J. T. C.], and to the promotion of whose welfare he has devoted himself with constant and self-denying zeal. About 70,000 of the most healthy lads and girls have been removed by this traffic from the New Hebrides, and corresponding numbers have been taken from other groups of the Polynesian Islands. Some years ago it was proved before a Royal Commission that these poor people were enticed from their homes by utterly false pretences; and the Commission decided with regard to one recruiting vessel that the story of the proceedings of its crew was a "long record of deceit, cruel treachery, deliberate kidnapping, and cold-blooded murders." Dr. Paton asserts that this must not be regarded as an exceptional instance, but that the traffic "has been steeped in human suffering, bloodshed, and deaths on the Islands and at sea from the commencement up to the present." The treatment of the wretched islanders on the Queensland plantations, according to Dr. Paton, is precisely what might be expected from the manner in which their services are secured. They are paid fourpence a day for doing work for which white men claim from five to eight shillings a day. Their tasks are so severe, and they are so inadequately fed, clad, and housed that the mortality among them has often reached the highest percentage in the world. Contrary to the law, they are supplied on Sundays with intoxicating drinks with which they are almost maddened; and "dreadful immorality is encouraged among them." The importation of fresh Kanaka labour was recently stopped, but is about to be renewed; and the world is assured that every precaution will be taken to prevent abuse. The Imperial Government will fall far short of its duty if it does not see that the precautions are genuine and effective. It is intolerable that the worst kind of disguised slavery should go on under the protection of the British flag."

St. James's Gazette, May 6.

[Abridged.]

"It will not do for us to help to introduce slavery into North Queensland."

After this disastrous utterance, the journal endeavours to place the question fairly

before its readers, as will be seen from the following note, and some articles now appearing.

St. James's Gazette, May 17.

"It is understood that the Opposition are still anxious to bring on a discussion as to the regulation of the labour traffic in Queensland; but at present there seems no reason to be dissatisfied with the aspect of affairs as presented by Baron H. de Worms. The Bill for renewing the importation of Kanaka labour has been passed by the Queensland Legislature, and assented to by the Governor. The Act is therefore even now in force; though if her Majesty's Government chose to disallow it, the recruiting, which may have by this time begun, could be stopped. But this exercise of the veto would precipitate a crisis between us and Queensland, which the Colonial Office will naturally wish to avoid, unless the interference were necessary; and the circumstances of the passing of the Act seem to show that it is not necessary. For five years, from 1885 to 1890, the recruiting was carried out without abuse by the help of regulations framed by the Queenslanders. And now they have promised to renew these regulations with even greater stringency. As long as the Queensland Government is strong enough to regulate the labour question on these lines, and as long as there is no evidence of abuse or outrages, it is not for us to interfere."

British Australasian, May 5.

"We prefer to think that the religious journals do not understand what they have been writing about rather than to suppose that they would wilfully misrepresent the case. It is to us a marvel that they should plead to leave the cannibal and the savage largely to his brutal instincts (for missionary effort, if praiseworthy, is very inadequate), when a useful training awaits him on these plantations. Rather should the missionary societies strive to assist, and relieve such hardships as may attend, the shipment of Kanakas by every means at their command, and persuade the men to take this step towards a training which can alone fit them for civilisation."

Review of Reviews, May.

"Each colony has, of course, a right to settle its own affairs in its own way, and no one will interfere with Queensland, whatever she does. But the decision to introduce the South Sea Island labourer into Queensland has been hailed both at home and in the other Colonies with sincere regret. It gives up the ideal of Australia for the whites, and it re-establishes Blackbirding. It may be inevitable, but if so it is to be hoped that Sir Samuel will go into the Blackbirding business himself. All labour recruiting should be forbidden, except to Government vessels, the captain and crew of which should be answerable directly to the Government which employed them, and none of them should profit to the extent of a single sixpence by the recruiting of the natives. The business is far too near akin to slave-trading to be entrusted to any except those who have no personal interest to serve in straining or evading the law, and who are personally responsible for its rigorous enforcement."

Guardian, May 11.

QUEENSLAND AND KANAKA LABOUR.

"SIR,—I have been rather surprised at the extraordinary statements made by some of your correspondents in reference to this class of labour, and the facts elicited are such as require explanation by some one who at least knows the true position of affairs. I do not profess to be able to sufficiently explain everything; but, having a knowledge of the labour market at home and abroad, I may in a measure be competent to express an opinion on the subject.

May I first ask if your correspondents have ever been in India when they state that labour for Queensland should be drawn from that point? I have at all events that experience. I have employed the Indian coolie at home and abroad, and I have particularly employed in Queensland Kanaka labour, and all other sorts of labour; and I assert that Queensland planters treat their "boys" better than the West Indian planters—certainly far better than the employers of Indian labour in their native land. In one company under my charge in India the coolie never had a Sunday to himself. He worked on and on every day, although Sunday was never recorded in the pay-sheets. The Indian, when he arrives on the West Indian plantations, gets a swamp to live in, and finds himself in everything out of an average wage of 1s. per day. As to liberty, he can never leave the plantation without a pass. This is what is known as "Government supervision of the Crown colonies;" and still he

is comparatively happy, and very often saves money out of his meagre earnings. It is true that a good man can by contract work make more in many of these plantations, and it must be admitted that in most cases a capable labourer can, on an equitable standard, make more than is required to support himself and family. But if liberty is any consideration, give me Queensland, where the Kanaka, when off duty, can do as he pleases. He builds his own hut according to his taste, he is fed and clothed, and practically wants for nothing.

At the end of the term for which he is engaged he is entitled to return to his island free of all cost, and, if he so elect, return to his employment with his passage paid. During the term of his employment he can save every penny of his wage. Can anyone desire more? If any factory hand in this great country had half the consideration, should we hear anything of Socialism? How can Kanaka labour interfere with the white colonist? It is an indisputable fact that several hundred women and children in Brisbane could not a short time ago pay the 1d. ferry fare to cross the river to the soup-kitchen. I could not ten years ago in Northern Queensland procure half the labour I required; indeed, I have known a gang of men leave me without a moment's notice because they were not supplied with plum-pudding three times a week, although their ordinary daily rations consisted of beef-steaks, flour, potatoes, tea, and sugar *ad lib.*

D. STUART.

16, Great George-street, Westminster, S.W., May 7, 1892."

The *Star* has been fighting us with all the weapons which a practised sensational style, and disregard of facts, make available. Two long leaders, "Slavery under Our Flag" and "The Flag that Frees the Slave," and some seventeen paragraphs and articles, appeared from May 6 to May 21. Great use was made of Mr. Playford's "practically slaves" cable, and it is not the *Star's* fault that a crisis has not arisen, as will be seen from these cuttings from its articles:

"The case against the Polynesian slave traffic is proved a thousand times over. No pretence of guarantee has been offered that the traffic will, in its revised form, be in any particular less shameful than it was in the years preceding 1890, and there is no safe ground for believing that such guarantees, even if they were offered, would be of any service to check the cupidity and ferocity of the slave-raider. The honour of England is clearly at stake, and it rests with the members of the Liberal Party who invited Mr. Smith to move the adjournment of the House to show that they will not willingly brook the renewal of this legalised atrocity."

"The precautions do not count. They are something merely by the way, and the importance which is attached to them by the promoters of the Bill is sufficiently indicated by the fact that they have made the Bill law before the precautions are known. That may be satisfactory to the Queensland sugar-planter and to Baron de Worms. It must not, and cannot be, satisfactory to reflective Englishmen. It is not yet too late. The Act has still to be received from the Queensland Government. When it is received, let the Liberal members who on May 5 shouted to Mr. Smith to 'move the adjournment,' leave no stone unturned to save England from being branded with an unparalleled and indelible dishonour."

"We have them at last. The 'stringent regulations' under which the Kanaka slave trade is for the future to be carried on were announced in Brisbane yesterday, and they are, we have not the slightest hesitation in saying, the most delusive and execrable piece of legislation ever approved by a British colony. We print in another column the text of the new regulations, and we invite special attention to the following provisions: The slave-collecting vessels are permitted to carry firearms, and it is specially provided that 'a ship's master may'—the murderous words drip already with Kanaka blood—"have two boats working together, the one containing the recruiting party and the other an armed crew." 'Working together,' indeed! The darkest hour of American slavery knew no more horrible provision than this. But—and here is the revolting hypocrisy of this dastardly traffic in human blood—"the engagement of natives on Sunday is forbidden." That caps everything. All that is contemptible in man can go no further. Let the rogues and vagabonds of the earth bow in unfeigned humility before this consummate combination of Christianity and kidnapping."

Whilst writing in this fashion, the *Star* was good enough to insert four letters

from Queenslanders, desirous of saying a word for their colony, one of which now follows :—

“SIR,—Will you permit me, as one who has some personal knowledge of the Queensland labour trade, to correct what I take leave to say is a distorted view on your part on the facts of this case. Your article of yesterday and your leader of to-day both beg the question. You appear to assume that the *Hopeful* atrocities are a more or less faithful picture of the system of recruiting which obtained until the Queensland Government prohibited the importation of Kanakas. That is a totally false assumption. I well remember the *Hopeful* case and the indignation which the proved cruelties excited throughout the colony. It was felt, and rightly felt, that more stringent regulations should in future govern the system of recruiting, in order to prevent the recurrence of such atrocities. Without going into details, it may suffice to say that thenceforward the Queensland Government exercised such strict supervision over the whole conditions of the trade that a repetition of the *Hopeful* crimes became well-nigh a matter of impossibility, and I make bold to assert that were a commission now appointed to inquire into the working of the recruiting system during the last five years of its existence, the report of the commissioners would be such as to dispel all notions of “slavery” or anything approaching it. Recruiting came to an end, not owing to any Exeter Hall outcry, and not because the Queenslanders wished to put a stop to a “slave trade;” the prohibition was simply the redemption of a General Election pledge, the latter being given in answer to the ‘parrot-cry’ of

“QUEENSLAND FOR THE WHITE MAN.”

No one was more bitterly opposed to any mitigation of the sentences of the *Hopeful* men than Sir Samuel Griffith, the present Premier, and it is a distinct slur upon his humaneness as a man and his wisdom as a statesman to suggest that he would now advocate the reintroduction of Kanaka labour into Queensland did he conceive a recurrence of the *Hopeful* case to be within the bounds of possibility. Besides, as our correspondent points out to-day, it is a fact, which I have over and over again noticed in my own experience, that many of the boys upon the expiration of their three years’ agreement preferred to re-engage for a further like period to returning home. The employer, I may add, was obliged to pay for the passage of all “boys” who, when their time was up, expressed a wish to return to their homes. “Slaves” should be delighted to escape from their “bonds,” one would think.

In conclusion, Sir, I would venture to suggest that it is somewhat inconsistent for a leading Home Rule journal like the *Star* to meddle with the domestic affairs of a self-governing Colony. The Queensland Government may be safely left alone to manage its own affairs, to know where its best interests lie, to legislate with due regard to the principles of humanity and justice, and it will, I feel sure, vindicate its right in the present instance to ignore equally the forebodings of alarmist missionaries and the attacks of ill-informed politicians.—Yours, &c.,

Crouch-hill, N., May 6.”

WM. C. MACKENZIE.

The question has been extensively dealt with by the Provincial Press. The *Sheffield Independent*, *Yorkshire Post*, *Birmingham Gazette*, *Birmingham Post*, *Leicester Post*, *Leeds Mercury*, *Glasgow Herald*, and *North British Daily Mail*, amongst other papers, have devoted leaders to it. With the exceptions of the *North British Daily Mail* (Glasgow), and the *Yorkshire Post*, all the allusions are more or less unfriendly to Queensland.

THE QUESTION IN PARLIAMENT.

[Times Reports].

HOUSE OF LORDS, MAY 5.

POLYNESIAN LABOUR IN QUEENSLAND.

In reply to Lord Kimberley, Lord KNUTSFORD said that the Colonial Office had not yet received a copy of the Act which he believed had been passed by the Colonial Legislature with reference to the employment of natives. He was, therefore, unable to say what precautions had been taken by the Legislature to guard against the abuses which had attended the system to which the noble earl had drawn attention.

He felt sure, however, that the Colonial Government had given very careful attention to the subject from the statements which had appeared in the newspapers as having been made by Sir S. Griffith, Premier of Queensland. Sir S. Griffith for many years opposed the continuance of this labour system, but last year saw reason to change his opinion, and now advocated the renewal of the system on the ground that it was impossible to carry on the sugar industry in Queensland with white labour. Another ground which he had for believing that the Government of Queensland had paid attention to the subject was that the Admiral of the station, Lord C. Scott, had been asked by the Government to report upon the system, and to favour them with any suggestions which he could make with a view to the prevention of abuses in connection with recruitment. The Admiral had not only forwarded a report explaining his own views, but also a report made by Captain Davies, who had had a long experience in the Polynesian islands. There was no doubt that the Queensland Government were fully alive, not only to the difficulties of the case, but also to the necessity of precautions for preventing abuses such as had been referred to by the noble earl. Perhaps he might be allowed to allude to what he thought was a misapprehension on this subject. As the noble lord had explained, the question arose first in connection with recruiting, and secondly with regard to the treatment of the natives when on the plantations. With regard to the second side of the question, he might say that, as far as her Majesty's Government were informed, there had been no question that the natives when employed on the plantations had been well treated. They had had no representations to the contrary, and they had searched without finding any official complaint made with regard to the treatment of the natives in this way. He should also like to mention, to confirm this view, that, while the number of labourers imported in the last few years had distinctly increased, the mortality had decreased; while on the 31st of December, 1890, there was in the savings bank the sum of £17,629 to the credit of the islanders, while in 1890 £2,000 had been spent upon hospitals alone for the natives. He mentioned this to show that with regard to the treatment of the natives in the colonies no fault was to be found. The abuses to which the noble earl had referred, and which had received most justly the strong condemnation of—he thought he might say—the civilized world, had been confined to the system of recruiting labourers in the islands. Those abuses had come to light in 1884, when the Government agent, the recruiting agent, and the captain and crew of the *Hopeful* had been tried in Queensland for offences committed in recruiting. Two of the latter, the captain and mate, were tried for murder and sentenced to death; though their sentences were commuted, it was only to penal servitude for life, five others being also sentenced to terms of penal servitude. Then came the Commission to which the noble earl had referred, which had reported in 1885. He would call attention to the fact that that Commission had not been instructed to inquire into the traffic generally, but into the incidents of a certain number of voyages. Therefore it should be remembered that the abuses—which were of a shameful character—reported by the Commission were confined to these eight voyages. The natives had also been taken from a special group of islands close to New Guinea. In his opinion it was hardly fair to condemn the whole system of recruiting on account of these undoubtedly serious abuses. He thought that it was fair to argue this because since 1885 recruiting had been going on, and, as he had said, there had been an increased number of natives each year, and yet there had been no representations of any abuse, nor had any complaint been brought to the notice of the Government except as to the hardships of the regulations. He hoped, therefore, that the very serious example which had been made and the inquiries conducted by the Commission had served as a warning against the repetition of such abuses. He did not think that any good would accrue from his now pointing out what precautions and what conditions her Majesty's Government would desire in the Queensland Act, because he was not yet aware of what precautions were contained in it. If it was necessary for Queensland that native labour should be introduced, there was force in what the noble earl had said, that we should have due precautions against the repetition of these abuses; but he thought that it was clearly the duty of the Queensland Government to see that every precaution was taken to avoid the occurrence of abuses in recruiting, and that continuous good treatment when in employment should be secured to the labourers, and also a safe return. He was sure that her Majesty's Government would support the Queensland Government in any precautions which they thought fit, however stringent, and they were paying special attention to this question.

The EARL of KIMBERLEY was not sure what the noble lord meant by saying that her Majesty's Government would support the Queensland Government. He contended that the Imperial Government was bound to see that the precautions were sufficient.

LORD KNUTSFORD said that her Majesty's Government had no desire to shirk their responsibility; what he meant was that there was a certain party in the colony who opposed any stringent regulations, and he thought, therefore, that Her Majesty's Government ought to support any regulation which was put in the Act.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MAY 5.

Mr. S. SMITH asked the Under-Secretary for the Colonies whether he was aware (1) that the Government of Queensland was about to re-open the traffic in Polynesian labour which was prohibited two years ago in consequence of the horrible atrocities that disgraced it; (2) whether he was aware that a Royal Commission investigated the whole matter in 1885, and reported that it was a traffic accompanied with every circumstance of deception and cruelty; that they reported that in the case of the labour vessel *Hopeful* "the history of the cruise was one long record of deceit, cruel treachery, deliberate kidnapping, and cold-blooded murders. The number of human beings whose lives were sacrificed during the recruiting could never be accurately known"; (3) whether a petition was signed in Queensland by 28,000 persons to get the murderers and kidnappers in the *Hopeful* pardoned, on the ground that these atrocities had been common, and it was hard to make these men the first victims; whether these men were now out of prison; and whether he was aware that it was proposed to give them a public banquet in the colony; (4) whether he was aware that the Royal Commission stated that the average mortality of these Pacific islanders on the sugar plantations of Queensland was 17·2 per cent. in one year, and that the wages paid were from 4d. per day, whereas white labourers earned from 5s. to 8s. per day; (5) whether he was aware that several islands of the New Hebrides had been almost depopulated by this inhuman trade; (6) and whether the Government would take steps to prevent what was virtually the revival of the slave trade under our flag.

Baron H. DE WORMS: Her Majesty's Government understand (1) that the Queensland Legislature has passed a Bill for allowing the re-introduction of South Sea Island labour to the colony; but no copy of the measure has yet been received. It is understood, however, that the Queensland Government are fully sensible of the necessity for stringent regulations for the protection of the labourers. (2) The Commission of 1885 did not investigate the whole subject of the traffic, but it embraced an inquiry into eight voyages, including that of the *Hopeful*, in which labour was recruited from the Louisiade Group and other islands adjacent to New Guinea. The Queensland Government after the report of the Commission took measures for returning to their homes the whole of the surviving labourers recruited on these voyages. The hon. member will find papers on these subjects in the Blue-books C-4,584 and C-5,883. The hon. member will see that there were special features in connection with these voyages, upon which a general condemnation of Polynesian labour could not fairly be based. (3) I believe that such a petition as that mentioned in the third paragraph of the question was made, but not on the grounds stated by the hon. member. It was alleged that the evidence on which the prisoners were convicted was unsatisfactory, and insufficient to establish their guilt. The men were released, but I am not aware that there was any intention to give them a public banquet. (4) As regards the fourth paragraph, I do not find any statement to this effect in the report of the Commission, but there appears to have been an exceptional mortality among the labourers recruited by the particular ships I have referred to. The money wage may be as stated in the question; but it must be borne in mind that the expense of the Polynesian labourer includes food, clothing, and lodging, and the cost of the return voyage as well as of the voyage to the colony. (5) It is believed that the population of the islands of the Pacific generally is diminishing; but there are other causes at work, and in the absence of authentic records it is not possible to say to what extent particular islands may have suffered a loss of population from recruiting. (6) Her Majesty's Government will support the Queensland authorities in any measures they may take to surround the engagement and employment of these men with proper safeguards; and, if due precautions are taken, it should be possible to regulate the traffic without the evils which the hon. member anticipates.

Mr. S. SMITH said that in consequence of the very unsatisfactory answer of the right hon. gentleman—(Opposition cries of “Hear, hear”)—and in consequence of the Government having virtually sanctioned a renewal of the slave trade, he would call attention to the question on the estimates. (Gladstonian cries of “Move adjournment.”);

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MAY 9.

Mr. S. SMITH asked the Under-Secretary for the Colonies whether, pending the receipt of the Bill passed by the Queensland Legislature for allowing the reintroduction of South Sea Island labour to that Colony, her Majesty's Government would secure that the traffic should not be reopened; whether he would engage that the papers relating thereto should be laid upon the table before the Royal Assent was given to the Bill; and whether he would lay upon the table the report of Lord C. Scott, the Admiral of the station, and that of Captain Davies, who had had a long experience in the Polynesian Islands.

Baron H. DE WORMS: Since the hon. member put his question on the paper the Secretary of State has telegraphed to the Governor to ask whether he had assented to the Bill, and whether it is in operation. If it has been assented to, Her Majesty has only the power of disallowing the Act, which has become law. The Secretary of State has further telegraphed that he trusts that the Colonial Government, if it is practicable, will delay issuing licenses under the Act until he has received and considered the measure, and the safeguards with which it is doubtless surrounded. The reports of the naval officers mentioned in the question shall be given with other papers bearing upon the subject. It may be satisfactory to the House that I should mention the fact that Polynesian labourers have been introduced under the existing regulations to Queensland in increasing numbers up to the beginning of last year (and I may state that, in 1890, 2459 labourers were so introduced), and that since the beginning of 1885, no case of kidnapping or of serious infringement of the regulations has, as far as we know, been brought under notice. It may therefore fairly be assumed that the regulations are sufficient if properly watched and enforced, and to this end the attention of both her Majesty's Government and the Queensland Government will be steadily directed.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MAY 13.

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary for the Colonies a question of which I have given him private notice—whether it is true, as reported in the *Times* of this morning, that the Royal Assent has been given to a Bill for renewing the importation of Kanaka labour and the repetition of the white slave trade.

Baron H. DE WORMS: The Bill has been passed, and the telegram which I have seen is substantially accurate. A telegram has also been received through the Agent-General of Queensland, which I will read to the House. [Here follows the telegram quoted in Sir James Garrick's letter to the *Times*.] The hon. member will see from the papers which will shortly be presented that, as I have already stated, immigration has for the last five years been carried on without any complaint. Before licences are issued the regulations are now to be made still more stringent. In these circumstances, and having regard to the assurances contained in the telegram I have just read, her Majesty's Government do not entertain any doubt as to the efficiency of the safeguards proposed by the Queensland Government.

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM: Considering the very deep interest taken in this country on this question, will the hon. gentleman not wait for postal communication or telegraph for these revised regulations, and lay them on the table of the House?

Baron H. DE WORMS: No, Sir, I will not promise to do that. He will see from what I have already stated that immigration has been carried on for the last five years without any complaint, and before licences are again issued regulations still more stringent will be made. Under these circumstances, and the assurances in the telegram, her Majesty's Government entertain no doubt that sufficient safeguards will be taken by the Queensland Government.

Mr. PICTON desired to know whether the Royal Assent which had been given would be overridden by the Royal prerogative.

Baron H. DE WORMS: The Bill having passed becomes law, and unless it is dissented from it is in force.

Dr. CLARK asked whether the matter would come under the cognisance of the High Commissioner of the Pacific, and whether he would look after it.

Baron H. DE WORMS: We have no reason to doubt the sincerity of the assurances given by the Queensland Government. (Hear, hear.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS, May 16.

Mr. S. SMITH asked the Under-Secretary for the Colonies whether the telegraphic statement which appeared in *The Times* of May 13, that Governor Sir Henry Norman had given the Royal assent to the Bill for renewing the importation of Kanaka labour for employment on the sugar plantations in Queensland, was correct; and, if so, whether her Majesty's Government had any further power to disallow this legislation.

Baron H. DE WORMS: As I have already stated, the Bill has been assented to by the Governor, and is therefore in operation. The power of disallowance still remains with the Queen. The Act as passed by the legislature has not yet been received, but I may remind the House that the outrages referred to by the hon. member in his former questions were all committed before 1885; and, looking to the fact that the recruiting and employment of natives have been carried on under the existing regulations from 1885 to the end of 1890 without any abuses, and that, as appears from the telegram from Queensland, those regulations will be made still more stringent, and as the Colonial Government is firmly determined to prevent infringement of those regulations, there would not seem to be sufficient ground for advising so exceptional a course as disallowance. I may also remind the House that the High Commissioner's Court of the Western Pacific has, under the Pacific Islanders' Protection Acts, and the Orders in Council made under these Acts and the Foreign Jurisdiction Acts, jurisdiction to try and punish British subjects for offences committed against natives of the Western Pacific Islands in, or within three miles of, any of those islands, or on board a British ship at sea.

Mr. S. SMITH asked whether the right hon. gentleman would allow time for the House to see the terms of the new Act before the Crown finally decided either to allow or disallow it.

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM asked on what date her Majesty's Government received from Queensland the knowledge that this Act had passed the Legislature; and also whether he would reconsider the determination, in view of the very strong feeling existing in this country on the matter, with regard to telegraphing for the new and stringent regulations which were or were going to be put into operation.

Baron H. DE WORMS: The recruiting could not be stopped except by immediate disallowance of the Acts; and her Majesty's Government, as I have just stated, are not prepared to take that extreme step. I would remind the hon. gentleman that, by colonial regulations, every law which has received the Governor's assent (unless it contains a suspending clause) comes into operation immediately or at the time specified in the law itself. But the Crown retains power to disallow the law; and if such power be exercised, the law ceases to have operation from the date at which such disallowance is published in the colony. That is the answer to the last question, because even though we telegraphed for the regulations now in force, we still could not prevent recruiting without disallowing the Act.

Mr. PICTON asked if the right hon. gentleman knew what these new and satisfactory regulations were. If he did know, would he lay them on the table of the House; if not, how could he be sure they were satisfactory?

Baron H. DE WORMS could only repeat the information he had already given. The information contained in the telegram which he read to the House on Friday, which was sent by the Governor of Queensland to the Agent-General, contained an assurance that the Colonial Government would impose the most stringent regulations to prevent the possible recurrence of those events which, in common with every member of the House, he lamented.

Mr. PICTON asked if the prerogative of the Crown to disallow the Act could not be held in suspense until the regulations were received?

Baron H. DE WORMS said he had endeavoured to make his meaning clear. His answer was that the recruiting could not be stopped except by an immediate disallowance of the Act.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS asked that the House at large should have an opportunity or saying what the present regulations were which had proved insufficient, and what the more stringent regulations were. Would the right hon. gentleman telegraph and obtain that information?

Baron H. DE WORMS: I believe, as far as I know, that the more stringent regulations are on their way home, but the House would not make any further advance by the course suggested. The House has only one course to take, either to let the matter go on, or disallow the Act already in force.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME-GRAHAM asked whether the Government were prepared to disallow the Act.

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM asked the right hon. gentleman to state what objection there possibly could be to telegraph for the more stringent regulations.

Baron H. DE WORMS: I do not see, subject to the opinion of my noble friend, that there is any objection to telegraphing, but I do not think that would in the least advance matters.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MAY 17.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Colonial Office was in possession of any report from the Government of Queensland respecting the manner in which the Kanaka traffic had been carried on since 1886 under the regulations at present in force; and whether he would lay such report upon the table.

Baron H. DE WORMS: A report has been issued annually since 1889 by the Queensland Immigration Department, and printed among the sessional papers every year. These reports will be included in the papers to be laid before Parliament.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS asked whether the reports would be published before the vote on account was taken.

Baron H. DE WORMS replied that that depended upon the date of the arrival of the papers from Queensland.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the revised regulations respecting the Kanaka labour traffic had been issued by the Government of Queensland; and whether he would lay a copy of these upon the table, and also a copy of the regulations they were intended to supersede.

Baron H. DE WORMS: The existing regulations will be included in the correspondence to be laid before Parliament; and the revised ones, if not received in time for that paper, will be added in a supplementary one. A telegram has been sent requesting that copies may be sent home as soon as settled.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS asked whether the revised regulations had actually been issued.

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM had understood the right hon. gentleman to say yesterday that he would telegraph asking that the revised regulations should be sent here by telegram.

Baron H. DE WORMS said that he had promised to telegraph for the regulations, but that he had not undertaken to ask that they should be telegraphed to this country. He did not know whether the revised rules had actually been issued or not.

Mr. BRYCE asked the right hon. gentleman to ascertain whether or not they had yet been despatched from Queensland.

Baron H. DE WORMS said that he had sent a telegram on the subject that morning.

Mr. S. SMITH asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention had been drawn to the statements by Mr. Hume Nisbet that in 1886 a labour vessel came into the Maryborough River "deluged with blood and filled with wounded men, through a rising of the cargo on board"; and that violence and ravishments were perpetrated by the lawless crews of the labour vessels upon the native women whom they conveyed to the labour plantations; whether he had seen Dr. Paton's statements, made in 1889, that at a hospital on the Queensland plantations which he visited, he found the patients to be nothing but native women and girls about to be confined, and that many white children were borne by them [Dr. Paton *does* make this petrifying statement in "Appendix D" to his *Autobiography*, p. 455—J.T.C.]; and that multitudes of native women died at the Queensland plantation hospitals from abuse on the plantations; had the Queensland Government anything but the bare word of the ship's agent and crew as to whether returned labourers were landed on their own islands and amongst their own people; and whether the right hon. gentleman had seen Dr. Paton's statement that in one case many had been landed on an island twenty miles from their home, while the ship's company declared they had fulfilled the conditions; and whether many natives were murdered through being placed among hostile tribes; whether it was true that the Commissioner of British New Guinea had forbidden the recruiting of Kanakas from the territory under his jurisdiction; was the right hon. gentleman aware that on the islands of the New Hebrides, from which these men were recruited, twenty-three distinct languages were spoken, many of which were unknown to any one but the natives, and that in consequence the conditions of their engagements could not have been explained to the natives; and whether, in view of these facts, the Government still adhered to their decision to allow the Act to become law.

Baron H. DE WORMS : In answer to the first and second paragraphs of the hon. member's question, my attention has not been drawn to the statements made by Mr. H. Nisbet, nor have I seen that attributed to Dr. Paton. The Secretary of State cannot accept these statements as correct without inquiry ; but the attention of the Colonial Government shall be drawn to them, and they shall be asked to report. With regard to the third paragraph, the Queensland Government agent is instructed to attend the vessels, and to see that the regulations are carried out. I believe it is a fact that some years ago returned labourers were occasionally landed in error upon other than their own islands. This arose from the difficulty of identifying the islands, which were then imperfectly known. I have not seen the statement of Dr. Paton referred to. As regards the fourth paragraph, the prohibition of recruiting Kanakas in New Guinea is contained in a New Guinea ordinance of 1888, which was approved by the Queensland Government. In reply to the fifth paragraph, I am aware that there is a great diversity of languages in the islands, and considerable difficulty has in the past been experienced as regards interpretation ; but this difficulty is diminishing in consequence of the large number of labourers who have now been returned to their homes from Queensland and other places, and who are able to explain to their fellows the nature of the agreement they are entering into. As regards the last paragraph, I would call the hon. member's attention to a letter from Bishop Selwyn, late Bishop of Melanesia, which appeared in the *Guardian* of May 4 of this year, in which he says,—“I cannot help feeling that the indiscriminate condemnation of the traffic which has been expressed is likely to do more harm than good. It was true of the traffic in the beginning. It is not true of the traffic as now conducted.” I can add nothing further to the statement I made yesterday.

Mr. S. SMITH gave notice that, in consequence of the unsatisfactory reply of the Under-Secretary of the Colonies, he should raise the whole question of the Polynesian labourers on the next vote on account.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MAY 23.

Baron H. DE WORMS, replying to Mr. J. ELLIS, said—The following telegram was received on Friday last from the Governor of Queensland :—“Polynesian Labour Act has been sent by mail of 22nd April ; debates in Parliament have been sent by mail of 29th April. Revised regulations go to-day. Every effort made to secure was reliable agents. I agree in Premier's telegram to Agent-General of 11th May which communicated to you. Regulations seem adequate.” The new regulations, which it will be observed are now on their way, will be presented to Parliament as soon as possible after their arrival. The hon. member will, no doubt, have seen the telegram in the *Times* of Saturday, which sets out the substance of them. The present regulations and the reports of the Polynesian Immigration Department with the existing Queensland Acts and recent correspondence will be given in a Parliamentary paper which, it is hoped, will be in the hands of members on Thursday.

ADDENDA : PRO AND CON.

CABLEGRAMS FROM AUSTRALIA.

BRISBANE, April 29.

In reply to questions, Dr. Saumarez Smith, Primate of Australia, who has just returned from the North, said that he should not be disposed to object to Kanaka labour being utilised in the cultivation of the sugar fields, provided that adequate control was exercised over the recruiting of the labourers, and that the terms upon which they were engaged themselves were rigorously supervised.—*Reuters*.

TOWNSVILLE, May 13.

Mr. Playford, the Premier of South Australia, was interviewed here by a Press representative as he passed through on his return from India, whither he went to make inquiries as to the possibility of utilising coolie labour for the cultivation of the tropical areas of the Northern Territory. Mr. Playford stated that the Government of India would supply all the coolies that were wanted, either as permanent colonists or as temporary labourers under agreement for a specified time. The Polynesian labourers imported from the South Sea Islands into Queensland were practically slaves. The coolies were strictly protected, and being confined to the cultivation of the soil in the tropical regions would in no way compete with white labour in the temperate districts of South Australia. Cheap labour was essential to the profitable development of the Northern Territory, and the coolies would be able to work wonders by means of irrigation.—Dalziel: *The Times*, Special.

Brisbane, May 16.

Mr. Playford desires to correct the statement attributed to him in the published report of the recent interview with him at Townsville that the Kanakas imported into Queensland were practically slaves. What he did say was that some people asserted that they were practically slaves.—Dalziel: *The Times*, Special.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

SIR,—In the telegraphic column of your paper on Saturday morning last there appeared the following:—

“Townsville, May 13.—Mr. Playford, the Premier of South Australia, was interviewed here by a Press representative as he passed through on his return from India. . . . The Polynesian labourers imported from the South Sea Islands into Queensland were practically slaves.”

I am aware of the general accuracy of your telegrams, but on reading this, and in view of Mr. Playford's position, I was so impressed with the inherent improbability of such a statement being made by him that I at once telegraphed to my Government as follows:—

“*Times* telegram states Playford at an interview with Press correspondent Townsville, stated Polynesian labourers imported from South Sea Islands into Queensland were practically slaves. Is report accurate?”

And give herewith the answer which I have received this morning from Brisbane:—

“Playford arrived yesterday here. Denies emphatically that he stated anything of the kind mentioned. Never ashore in Queensland before yesterday.”

I shall be obliged by your giving due prominence to this contradiction, as the original Townsville telegram has already been quoted in some newspapers as a reason for opposing the reintroduction of Polynesian labour into Queensland, and I know your spirit of fair play would not allow—what all Englishmen dislike—any hitting below the belt.—I am, Sir, yours obediently,

JAMES F. GARRICK, Agent-General for Queensland.

Queensland Government Office, Westminster-chambers,
1, Victoria-street, London, S.W., May 16.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

SIR,—In reference to the letter of Sir James Garrick, the Agent-General for Queensland, which appeared in your issue of the 18th inst., impugning the accuracy of the reported interview with Mr. Playford, the Premier of South Australia, at Townsville on the 13th inst., it would appear from Sir Samuel Griffith's telegram, to which Sir James Garrick alludes, that the interview may have taken place on board the steamer by which Mr. Playford was proceeding to Brisbane instead of on shore at Townsville, as the wording of the message might seem to indicate.

This quibble disposed of, we have only to reassert the substantial accuracy of the message as supplied to *The Times* by our agency. Mr. Playford subsequently modified the statement of his views on the Kanaka labour question as given by his Townsville interviewer, and the correction was, at his request, conveyed in our Brisbane message, which was printed in *The Times* on the 17th inst., in the following words :—

“Mr. Playford desires to correct the statement attributed to him in the published report of the recent interview with him at Townsville, that the Kanakas imported into Queensland were practically slaves. What he did say was that ‘some people asserted that they were practically slaves.’”

The fact that Mr. Playford supplied the correction is proof of the *bona fides* of the interviewer, and if further confirmation were needed it may be found in the fact that a condensed version of the same interview was cabled to your contemporaries from another source on the same date as our original message.—Yours faithfully,

DALZIEL'S CABLE NEWS AGENCY, Limited.

(Davison Dalziel, Managing Director.)

Executive Offices, 222 to 225, Strand, May 20.

[NOTE.—There is no “quibble” to dispose of. The Agent-General did not raise the point as to where the interview took place—on sea or land. Of course, the only part of the cablegram which Sir James Garrick “impugned” was the sentence in which Mr. Playford is reported to say that “the Polynesian labourers imported from the South Sea Islands into Queensland were practically slaves.” Considering that this is “corrected” by the Agency (as above) itself, the confident “reassertion of the substantial accuracy of the message,” appears extraordinary. As the Agency in this letter refers to “another source,” it is interesting and significant to find, when the inquirer turns to Reuter's message (which is referred to), given below, that it contains no word of “slavery,” “practically,” or otherwise.]

BRISBANE, May 13.

In an interview with a Press representative at Townsville to-day, the Hon. Thomas Playford, Premier of South Australia, who recently returned from his visit to India, and is now staying in Queensland, stated that arrangements had been made for the immediate importation into South Australia of 100 Indian families, who would settle in the Northern Territory of the colony, and cultivate the products of that tropical region. The Indian Government was willing to supply coolies, either as settlers or labourers, *on terms similar to those on which Kanaka labour was employed*, the sole condition being that the Government should supervise their transport and arrival. In conclusion, Mr. Playford assured his interlocutor that the importation of the coolies would not create any competition with white labour.—*Reuters*.

The Aborigines' Protection Society met on May 18. Sir Joseph W. Pease, according to the *Star*, said: “The Kanakas were kidnapped, cajoled by false promises which appealed to their cupidity, their boats were wrecked by the labour-collecting crews, and they were either drowned, or rescued and taken to be slaves on the Queensland sugar plantations, where the white man refused to work.”

The Rev. Dr. Matthews stated that “the details of the treatment of the labourers on the plantation were so horrible that he preferred not to dwell upon them.”

The resolution, "That this meeting regards with alarm the revival of the Polynesian Kanaka system in Queensland, and considers that it is incumbent upon her Majesty's Government and the British Parliament to avert the grave evils that are threatened" was adopted unanimously, and, adds the reporter, "another nail was put in the coffin of slavery under the British flag."

Mr. R. B. B. Clayton, one of the first Polynesian inspectors under the Act of 1868, an old Queensland colonist, wrote to the papers, and lectured at Oxford, with the very laudable object of giving the British public some doses of truth to counteract the poison of the Paton Pamphlet. He adds that if the opponents of Kanaka labour over here really had at heart the cause of the Polynesians, they would do more good by starting an English fund to help the Queensland Kanaka Mission than by attempting to coerce the colony in a matter which they imperfectly understood.

A gentleman now living in London, who, in 1882 and 1883, was Government agent in two of the schooners, sends me notes relating to his trips to the New Hebrides, Banks, and Torres Islands, from which I extract the following:—"On the arrival of the boats at the beach, a boy would come down and say, 'What name ship?' After satisfying the curiosity of the natives, they would, perhaps, after trading, go off on board to make further inquiries. I always personally explained, and also through interpreters, the nature of the agreement, 'That they were to go to Queensland for three years' ('three yams'), 'and then come back.' I made a point of always calling at the missionary stations, and have been well received on all occasions. The recruits are nearly all young men, and the way they improve and develop on the voyage, and afterwards on the plantations, with regular food and exercise, is marvellous; they are generally fine fellows when they arrive at Queensland, but slight and 'soft,' but go back with muscles like those of a blacksmith."

"2, Handel-street, Brunswick-square, W.C., May 23, 1892

MY DEAR CRITCHELL,—Hearing you are about to issue a much-needed pamphlet in reply to the abominable and baseless charges so freely fulminated forth by an ignorant Press against the Colonists and Government of Queensland in connection with the employment of Polynesians on sugar plantations, I have thought that a few lines from me on the subject might be of service to you.

As you are aware, I have had exceptional opportunities of acquiring special knowledge on the subject, not only from long residence in the colony, and in my capacity as special correspondent, having visited almost every part of it, but also from the fact that I am very familiar both with the islands of the South Pacific and New Guinea; as special correspondent of the *Brisbane Courier*, I visited every scene of the alleged outrages, enquired into by the Royal Commission of 1885, and accompanied the steamer, *Victoria*, when she returned between 400 and 500 so-called kidnapped natives to their island homes.

I understand you are dealing fully with the whole question, and I will, therefore, confine myself to one or two points which seem to be unknown, suppressed, or lost sight of by the fanatics who have been recently disporting themselves in the obliging columns of certain weak-kneed or bigoted journals.

As to Mr. Paton and his outrageous charges, you are in possession of a copy of the debate in the Queensland Parliament in which that reverend firebrand is exposed. I should like, however, to add a refutation of some of his other statements. Bishop Barry, in the *Guardian*, quotes Mr. Paton as follows:—"Seventy thousand have been taken from the New Hebrides, and similar proportions from other groups, nearly half depopulating our islands, and many thousands of them (presumably the natives, not the islands) have been laid in their graves in Queensland."

The population of the New Hebrides is undoubtedly less than it was; but where is the greatest diminution apparent? I answer—in the island of Aniteum, the most important of the group [one of Dr. Paton's own islands! The one on which he first landed, when on August 30, 1858, he reached the New Hebrides—J. T. C.]. Here the natives are undoubtedly dying out, and the population has been diminished within a generation by something like 50 per cent. But in Aniteum, which adjoins Tanna, the natives are all Christians. For thirty years it has been dominated by the Presbyterian missionaries, and during that time (I am speaking of up to 1889, when I left Queensland) no trader has ever settled on the

main island, which has also been avoided by the recruiter. The missionaries have had full scope, have encountered no opposition. Emigration has been stopped, and inter-tribal fights are unknown. Murders, also, are things of the past. Yet the population has steadily diminished, and in a far greater ratio than in any other island in the New Hebrides. This, at any rate, is not due to the Polynesian labour traffic.

In April, 1878, the Rev. George Brown, a missionary, located himself on Duke of York Island, between New Britain and New Ireland, sent Polynesian teachers and their wives to the neighbouring large islands, remaining himself in security. Some of these teachers were killed by the natives of New Britain. The news reached Mr. Brown about April 8. He organised a retaliatory expedition, in which a large number of the inhabitants of New Britain were slain, the natives themselves giving the number as fifty. Villages and plantations were also ravaged and destroyed. Speaking in his own defence at a public meeting in Albert-street, Brisbane, on May 19, Mr. Brown said:—"I claim to be a man first, then a missionary; above all, an Englishman!" Had he been a trader, or the captain of a labour schooner, he would probably have been hanged in spite of his claims.

I will leave you to deal with the main question, feeling convinced that the English people have only to have the true facts of the case laid before them to turn with contempt from the flood of unsubstantiated abuse which is now deluging the pulpit, the platform, and a section of the Press.—Faithfully yours,

WILLIAM B. LIVESEY."

[NOTE.—It will be seen that Mr. Livesey uses a sufficiency of warmth in his very valuable letter, and that he does not mince his words.]

The issue of *Round the Compass in Australia*, by Gilbert Parker, within the last day or two enables me to give a word from the notes of a man trained to observe accurately and to write carefully. Mr. Parker spent a long time in Queensland in 1889, and looked at this question from every point of view, as a perfectly unbiassed spectator. He liked the Kanaka, and found that he was well treated and happy on the plantations, and, after a careful survey of the situation, the author was so satisfied of the advantage to the Queenslander and the Melanesian of the labour traffic, that he expressed his firm belief in "ultimate justice to the planters and the triumph of the good sense of the people."

Mr. Hume Nisbet and Mr. Henry Varley have favoured the *Star* with letters bearing strongly on our poor colony. As Mr. Nisbet has written a book, and, I believe, qualified as an authority on Queensland public questions by spending a few weeks, artistically engaged, in the colony, his letter may prove of interest to Queenslanders:—

"Permit me to add my protest to that of your correspondent, Henry Varley, against this horrible and murderous traffic in human flesh being continued under the Union Jack.

"No improvement in the laws regarding this trade can possibly make it fair trade. It was, is, and ever must be a game of decoying ignorant natives away from their homes, families, and friends, to a fate not alone of exile, but with misery and death.

"For three years they must remain with their owners; they are not allowed to bring their wives and children with them, they are herded together in bothies on the plantations, and made to work in unwholesome swamps

"Knowing savage races as I do, the unsympathetic surroundings of these three years' slavery are enough to kill those emotional children of nature, even although the location and work were ever so healthy, and therefore it is no wonder if few ever return to their homes again, and those few only broken-down wrecks. The Government provides hospitals for the invalides, and these hospitals are always filled, as are the Kanaka graveyards.

"The planter takes what work he can out of the natives while they can work, and then, when they break down, shifts all responsibility from his own shoulders; there-

fore I say that the American slaveholder who bought his slave outright, and kept him until he died, allowing him at least some of the pleasures of life in the form of domesticity, is rather more to be commended than the Queensland owner, who only works his slave to death, and then leaves him to die without any further personal expense or care."

Pamphleteering apparently runs in the Paton family circle, for, as this little work goes to press, I am privileged to glance at "The Queensland Kanaka Labour Traffic since 1885." Under the auspices of the Rev. James Paton, B.A., of Glasgow, the "Hon. Secretary" of Dr. John G. Paton, supplements Dr. Paton's Protest with sixteen pages of reprints. When I say that the chief sources of the Hon. Secretary's inspirations are the writings of Dr. Paton and Mr. Hume Nisbet, I give a sufficiently close idea of the scope and value of his production. Dr. Selwyn's letter to the *Guardian* is drawn upon, but, curiously enough, I notice that the Hon. Secretary has omitted to give the most important of Dr. Selwyn's paragraphs, which has proved, and will continue to prove, I am glad to say, a most complete stumbling-block to the Paton action. I mean this:—"Such are the regulations, and it seems to me an abuse of words to call such a system 'slavery' or inhuman."

[No words of mine will add the slightest weight to the following pronouncement. My apology for placing the letter here is the fact that it has only this morning been issued from the Press.]

THE POLYNESIAN LABOUR TRAFFIC AND THE NEW TRADES UNIONISM.

"The objectors to the Act of the Queensland Parliament renewing authority to issue licenses for the conveyance of Polynesian labourers to Queensland for employment in tropical agriculture may be distinctly divided into two classes—philanthropists, and representatives of the New Trades Unionism. With the one it is a question of humanity, with the other a matter of wages and submission absolute to the dictation of the Australian Labour Federation. The philanthropists say this is a re-introduction of the slave trade with all its horrors. And they base their arguments and their fears, so far as the Queensland traffic is concerned, on what took place previous to 1885, for nothing has been alleged as to the practices in the trade in French vessels between the Islands of Melanesia and New Caledonia, or in British vessels between the same Islands and Fiji. Now, I was a member of the Royal Commission of 1885, took a large, perhaps the largest share in conducting the investigations, and drafted the report which has been the fruitful source of quotation and commendation by the opponents of Kanaka labour. I cannot therefore be accused of violent partisanship in favour of the Polynesian Labour Traffic. On the contrary, my condemnation has been all the other way. But I am bound to admit that not a word can be truly urged against the labour traffic as conducted in Queensland vessels from 1886, till the present day. There are obvious reasons for this complete change in the conditions of the traffic. First: The conviction and punishment of those concerned in the *Hopeful* atrocities and other kidnapping cases. Second: The atrocities revealed by the investigations of the Royal Commission were committed on voyages to New Guinea, the Louisiade Archipelago, the D'Entrecasteux Group and New Ireland, which had never been previously visited by labour vessels. The Queensland Government, convinced on our report that these islanders had been kidnapped or enticed from their homes for only three months instead of three years, returned them all to their islands at an expense of many thousands of pounds. Third: The Government prohibited for the future recruiting at New Guinea or any islands in the British sphere of influence—confining the engagement

of labourers to those islands where the natives had had experience of the business, and knew perfectly the conditions of the contract, and in what labour they were to be employed. Fourth : New and stricter regulations were issued for the conduct of the trade, and a higher stamp of Government Agents, who accompany all labour vessels, were appointed. The result has been that not a single serious complaint has been made since of illegal recruiting, nor even of practices which by strict interpretation might be called irregular. I do not believe there is a word of truth in the savage story quoted by Mr. Samuel Smith in the House of Commons the other day, that "In 1886 a labour vessel came into Maryborough river deluged with blood and filled with wounded men through a rising of the cargo," and "of the ravishments of almost nude native women by lawless crews of labour vessels." I was in Maryborough in that year on a Government commission, and must have heard (which I did not) of such charges had they been seriously made, or of the alleged events had they actually occurred. The Press of Australia is neither negligent of the duty of ferreting out abuses, nor of procuring "good copy"; and as editor of the leading journal of Queensland, with a strong and officially reinforced interest in the Kanaka trade and their employment on the sugar plantations, I can remember from 1885 till last year neither scandal nor outstanding incident connected with the traffic. Nor do I recall a single report of illegal recruiting made during these years by any of the Commanders of the ships of the Australian Squadron which act as the police patrol of the Coral seas. Sir William Macgregor, Governor of New Guinea, trained in the school of Sir Arthur Gordon, and an almost passionate protector of the native races, has discovered no abuses. There is the strongest testimony forthcoming from independent witnesses that kidnapping is a thing of the past. Mr. J. W. Lindt, F.R.G.S., England, an artist and traveller of repute, and author of perhaps the most interesting book on New Guinea, has lately been sojourning in the New Hebrides with ulterior literary and artistic objects. Writing on 23rd March from Melbourne, he says that, "Whenever he had the chance he asked the natives of the New Hebrides what they thought of going to Queensland, and found it was a subject they rather liked talking about. The individual who can boast of having been in Queensland 'two fellow time' thinks a good deal of himself, and is considered a sort of oracle among his untravelled friends. His knowledge of the ways of the white man gives him an ascendancy which he could not have attained had he stayed at home. He is aware of it, and proud accordingly. I questioned invariably how they were treated, what place they worked at, and what was their master's name. In nineteen cases out of twenty they spoke well of their master, and the women who had been assisting in house-work could not tell me enough about their 'missus.' Many regretted they could not go over for another term when it became known that the labour vessels would cease to call. Strange to say, they all and everyone have a dislike to go to New Caledonia; and at Belgaule, on the North-west of Santo, I found the natives to have a particular dislike to the French for the reason that on several occasions 'boys' from that part of the coast had been enticed on board of New Caledonian traders, and carried off against their will. The native knows perfectly well what he is doing when he ships on board a Queensland craft, which carries the distinctive badge of the labour vessel in the foretop. Hundreds have been and returned, and their experiences are discussed in detail at the camp fire until there is nothing left to tell. There is a feeling among the young men that they are 'all the same man-bush' if they have not been away, and this begets a longing to see the world, to be able to say that they also saw the big steamers, the railways, and the thousand other sights the white man's country affords. . . . To deny that the Islanders have profited by their term of work in Queensland is simply idle talk. There is no gain-saying it." It is inevitable that with contact with the world there should arise in the more intelligent and enterprising of these Polynesians a longing to leave their homes for Australia. And it is exactly that longing which the missionaries resent, and makes them foes of all migrations. Professor Drummond after personal experience on the islands, with more philosophy and knowledge of the world than the island-bound missionaries, recognises the labour apprenticeships in Queensland as a direct means of the future regeneration of savage Polynesia. A "boy" named Cago acted as interpreter for me and resided in my house in Brisbane for several months. When he returned to New Guinea, he entered the Rev. Dr. Lawes's school at the Port Moresby Mission, was then advanced to the college for Native teachers, was recently ordained as a native missionary among his own tribesmen in the Milne-Bay District on the North-East of New Guinea. I had a letter from him a few months ago most

admirably written, and he is doing well. Sir W. Macgregor, Governor, and the Hon. Mr. Musgrave, Colonial Secretary of New Guinea, have spoken most favourably to me of Cago. But it is said by humanitarians and religionists, who display more zeal than knowledge, that the treatment of the Kanakas on the sugar plantations of Queensland is "the worst kind of slavery." Dr. Paton, the well-known missionary to the New Hebrides, and now located at Melbourne, with a painful hysteria which one grieves at in so otherwise good a man, says that "the cruel oppression and bloodshed cry to Heaven for vengeance," that "the sugar planters may not care for such agony, and even wink at such crimes, but God sees, and will avenge." Now as to the facts. I have been on almost every plantation in Queensland, and have carefully inspected for months the largest of them from Cairns in the North to Nerang Creek in the Extreme South. The hours of labour of the Kanakas are limited to ten, and at certain periods to eight per day. The food is inspected as to quality, and specified as to quantity by Government Officials. No practical restriction is made as to the quantity of bread consumed, and that bread is baked from the same flour by the same bakers as for the planters' and managers' table. There are sweet potatoes, yams, and rice galore, and not less than three-quarters of a pound of fresh meat per day, together with an allowance of tea, coffee, or cocoa. The huts provided for the labourers are certainly superior to those I have seen inhabited by the peasants in the North of Scotland and West of Ireland, but the "boys" often prefer to build for themselves grass humpies, to which they are accustomed in their own islands. Medical attendance is provided, and when really ill, comfortable, not to say luxurious hospitals are set apart for them. Is there cruel oppression in all this? I doubt not there are hundreds of thousands of men and women in every large city of Great Britain who passionately yearn for such cruel oppression. Dr. Paton has given currency through Mr. S. Smith in the House of Commons to a wicked slander. He says that he found the hospitals filled with women and girls about to be confined, as the result of outrages by white men. The statement is monstrous, and is the outcome of a perverse and perverted imagination. Rape even of a coloured woman is punishable with death in Queensland, and, I venture to say, that nowhere is there less chance of condonation of crime against women. The hospitals are presided over by medical men, having mostly British qualifications, who furnish to their employers, the Queensland Government, annual reports and statistics of their cases. I affirm from a perusal of these reports for six years, that not even colour can be given to the calumnious charges of Dr. Paton. There is good authority for appealing from Philip drunk to Philip sober. I appeal from the hysterical and imaginative Dr. Paton, to the sober and singularly modest Rev. Alexander C. Smith, convener of the Heathen Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland, who has lately been making a tour of the sugar plantations in the Mackay and Bundaburg districts, and has visited nearly 6000 of the 9500 in the colony. Writing on 23rd March, Mr. Smith says:—"I found their hours of labour were very fair, and their work, from their own confession, far from heavy. I examined their food and found it good and plentiful. I went to several of their houses and found they were in many cases built by the islanders themselves, according to their own tastes, which they often preferred to those offered by their employers. I could see their clothing to be everywhere decent. As to the charge that they are 'buried like dogs' (made by Dr. Paton), I saw nothing of it, and don't believe it. There was on several of the plantations a house, a kind of hospital set apart for the sick (this is in addition to the Government hospitals in every sugar district), where they are kindly attended to, and out of which when they died, they were taken and decently buried, the missionary performing the ceremony at the grave. As to the charge that it is the worst kind of slavery known, it is utterly unfounded, a perfect myth. There is not a vestige of it. I found among the islanders a general air of contentment, if not placid happiness, pervading them all, and I learned that after they had left they were in many cases desirous to return to their old plantations, and even begged to be taken back. Would that be so if the cruellest kind of slavery were crushing them down? It were well if all the white labourers in the colony were as well off, and as well cared for both in a temporal and a spiritual sense as these Kanakas. As to their temporal condition, many of them have money laid up in a savings bank, as I saw from the many pigeon-holes in the police magistrate's offices. As to their moral condition, under our mission for three years back, out of 2800 there are 1800 become pledged total abstainers. / The planters in the Mackay district

are not only well disposed to the mission, but give it every support in their power. All subscribe to it, with, I believe, one single exception, and they afford the 'boys' every facility on Sabbath days to attend church, and on week nights the mission school. They have a building rented for them for service on Sabbath, and for instruction four nights in the week in reading, writing, arithmetic, singing, and praying. One planter and his wife instruct weekly 150 Kanakas, having built a schoolroom for them, while the 'boys' and 'Marys' in that one district alone (being too far for week-night attendance at the headquarters of the mission at Walkerston) in six months subscribed £15 to the mission. The missionary, the Rev. J. M. L. McIntyre, is a most devoted, zealous, painstaking man, and has been blessed with wonderful success, 155 having been baptised in three years. Now, I ask, could such a state of things exist if the Kanakas in Queensland were pressed down under the 'worst form of slavery' upon the earth? Why, the very statement of such a thing carries its own refutation with it." This kind of "cruel oppression which cries to heaven for vengeance," is not without other independent witness. The special correspondent of the *Brisbane Courier*, a journalist of undoubted honour, and who has been personally known to me for years, is making at present a tour of the sugar-plantations of Queensland. During March he was in the Wide Bay district, several hundred miles from the scene of the Rev. Mr. McIntyre's labours and the Rev. Mr. Smith's testimony, and on the 24th of that month he writes from Maryborough:—"The Kanakas are a light-headed people, if one may judge of their nightly merry-makings, the songs and dances peculiar to their own land; and the peals of laughter which may be heard every few minutes from the groups of young fellows are good proof that they are not despondent or morose. Each night, on every place where a good number of 'boys' are employed, two or three who have accepted Christianity, and have been taught to read, gather classes of their fellows round them, and become in their humble way missionaries of the Gospel of Christ. So each night there is what the Kanakas term 'school' held, and this is carried out with as much earnestness at Doolbi as on any of the large plantations where the work is of a more systematic character. Last Sunday night the Kanaka quarters were very quiet as I walked with two others over to where the service was to be held. Even the unconverted 'boys' regard the Sabbath at Doolbi; a few go shooting, but the majority accept the day as it was given to man—as a blessing. No 'corroboree' is held on Sunday. In most districts and on most of the plantations there are church buildings of wood and iron for the Kanaka services. The 'boys' at Doolbi boast no such edifice, but with their own hands and in their own spare time have erected a grass hut some 30 feet in length, and under that rude shelter I witnessed the service to which I have alluded. Our visit was not expected by the 'boys,' but as soon as we entered the hut, room was made for us on one of the rough benches which have been provided. Service had not been opened. Seated in the hut, and arrayed in their best clothes, were some forty Kanakas, nearly all fine stalwart men, and at a rough table at the end of the place were the two 'boys' who were to conduct the service. The table was covered with a red cloth, and on it were hymn books and a couple of well-worn Bibles. The hut was lighted with swinging lanterns. At the back of the humble ministers were several religious prints and texts. There was very little in the scene to impress the casual observer, but the purpose of the gathering, the fact that the building was erected and furnished—rudely it may be—by men who a few years before were savages, and the quiet, earnest demeanour of the little band of worshippers were points which could not be lightly regarded. The service was opened with a hymn, the leader reading over a few words at a time and the congregation following him. The singing was good, at all events, it was earnest. The 'boys' manage to pick up Ira D. Sankey's tunes remarkably well. The leader then delivered an address on two of the miracles performed by Christ—the feeding of the multitude with the five loaves and two fishes, and Christ and Peter walking on the water. These miracles were expounded in the Kanaka English, but with singular clearness. 'Always trust in Jesus Christ,' he said, 'in everything, and He will guide and keep you safe: and He will take you where there is no more hungry, no more thirsty, no more sick, no more work, only sing and praise God all de time.' On several occasions the Kanaka preacher was very happy in his elucidations of portions of Scripture which he read in broken English. He was endeavouring to illustrate the necessity for men to get rid of their load of sin before they could enter the narrow gate of Heaven, and said:—"Now 'sposе big railway truck come long a mill with

cane, that feller can't come in a long a small feller door. He must come in a long a big door. 'Spose taken off all that cane, then that feller go in long a small feller door. All a same a long a sin. 'Spose you go long a heaben with a big feller load sin, you no go in long a small gate. You go in long a big gate long a hell. Yes, countrymen. 'Spose you ask'em Christ make you good; He take away that big feller load sin, then you plenty go in long a small feller gate long a heaben. Yes, countrymen, yes.' At the close of the address another hymn was sung, and then prayer was offered by the two principal 'boys.' They prayed earnestly to be made 'strong,' and thanked God that they had not broken the Sabbath, and they prayed also for their master, and for all their countrymen who had not been converted. Then the whole congregation repeated the Lord's Prayer, kneeling down the while, each head bent reverently. The service closed with the Doxology, sung with great spirit, and the 'boys' filed out to their respective sleeping places." Polynesians are naturally intelligent. They are not long in Queensland, even if entirely "new chums," before they have a very keen appreciation of self-interest, and although they are not so litigious as Javanese labourers, they are not slow to appeal to the Government Inspector or nearest police magistrate when they conceive that the rights and privileges conferred upon them by the law are being invaded. Those who have been for some years in Queensland have taken on more than a varnish of civilisation, and are proud, not only of the balance they can show in the Government Savings Bank, but of the watch and chain with which they often adorn themselves, and the use of which as a timekeeper they know perfectly. They will have none of the old uniforms which in the very early days so pleased the untutored savage; a tweed suit they must have for Sunday and town wear. The wild calumnies about slavery, cruel oppression, and so on, have, I think, been pretty effectually disposed of. Large-hearted philanthropists, such as Mr. Samuel Smith, may rest assured that atrocities like those committed on the memorable cruise of the *Hopeful* are not indissolubly connected with legitimate recruiting. Kanakas can now be engaged in their own island homes for a term of years' service in Queensland as much free from constraint and over-reaching as agricultural servants can be engaged at hiring fairs in Great Britain and Ireland, and separation from home ties and family associations is no more morally wrong in the one case than in the other.

Having fairly and fully answered the humanitarian and philanthropic objectors to the action of the Queensland Parliament, I turn to the politico-economic opponents who, despite their Home Rule principles for home consumption, urge the Imperial veto of domestic legislation in a distant colony. In the same category, of course, are the movers and supporters of the condemnatory resolutions in the New South Wales and Victorian Parliaments. The strings of opposition are pulled, both here and at the antipodes, by the labour leaders of the new unionism or their sympathisers and abettors. "Australia for the Whites," is a cry which has been adopted from two different sets of reasons by two widely separated classes of people; by thoughtful statesmen on principles of public policy, and by doctrinaires of the New Unionism on pseudo-economic grounds. Philosophic politicians, looking to the future of their great continent, seek to preserve it for a homogeneous white population, and thus avert everything in the shape of the race problem. "What to do with the Negroes?" which is a growing difficulty and danger in America. Australian Governments have practically closed their ports to the Chinese in the teeth of the Tien Tsin Treaty between China and Great Britain; and have hesitated to accept Hindoo Coolies, Malays from Java, Japanese, or Polynesians from the Islands of the Western Pacific, because they did not wish to see side by side with a white population mainly of Anglo-Saxon blood, endowed with full political and social rights and privileges, an alien and servile population to whom it would be inexpedient if not impossible from every point of view to concede equal citizenship. The doctrinaires of the New Unionism demand it is true Australia for the whites because their brotherhood of man does not embrace men of colour. Moreover the whites, for whom they graciously reserve Australia, must be only those prepared to accept their economic doctrines, bind themselves with shackles more powerful than those of the West African Negro to the self-constituted labour leaders, surrender individual opinion and liberty, work only when the signal is given and for wages fixed not by the free play of a free market and the mutual arrangement of employers and employed, but by a secret conclave sitting in Sydney or Melbourne. Economic facts and natural laws have been more powerful than the theorisings of the philosophic politicians. A purely white Australian is either a dream or its realization must be post-

poned. The new unionists, however, say in effect, "Better Australia a desert than that our principles should be defeated and our dominance be subverted." The area of Queensland is 668,224 square miles, and of this only 224,000 acres are under tillage, of which more than 55,000 acres are devoted to sugar cane. In the outdoor cultivation of these 55,000 acres of canes, about 10,000 Kanakas have been employed. Now the theory of Sir S. W. Griffith and the Queensland Government, in stopping the issue of the Kanaka recruiting licences in 1890, was that in the course of a few years the Kanakas would be returned to their islands, white labourers would gradually take their places, the plantation system be abolished by degrees, and the cultivation of the canes be separated from the manufacture of the sugar. The sugar estates and the unalienated coast lands were to be cut up into small farms, each worked by a family of yeoman settlers. Capitalists, holding existing sugar mills, and others erecting central mills in new farming districts, were to buy the cane at a contract price per ton (this year it is from 10s. to 12s. per ton) from the small farmers, and to devote their whole skill and energies to the manufacture of sugar and its by-products—molasses, golden syrup, and rum. The experiment has already been tried with success in the Bundaburg, Wide Bay, and Mackay districts, and the plan has long been in operation in the bottom lands of Texas and other of the sub-tropical and tropical states of America. The transition period was to be tided over by the introduction of immigrants from Great Britain, Denmark, Germany, and Piedmont, who would learn the business at a fixed wage, with rations and house room, and gradually acquire their holdings or selections on easy terms. The wages to be paid by the planters during the transition period did not please the labour party in Queensland, who, by wildly exaggerated descriptions of "the white slavery" to which the immigrants were to be subjected, managed to stop the projected immigration from Germany and Denmark, and eventually to shut off the stream from Great Britain itself. Meantime the commercial depression had set in in the colony, and many artisans and labourers were thrown out of employment. The planters of the Bundaburg district offered to give work to the unemployed on their cane farms at £1 a week with rations, and a number of men went there on these terms. But emissaries of the unions appeared in the camp, sowed distrust and discontent, and on various pretexts the foolish workmen left the planters in the lurch, returned to the towns, where they preferred to loaf and shout for "bread or work" at 8s. a day. The time was approaching when, according to the Act of 1885, the employment of Kanakas must cease and determine, and the islanders be sent back to their homes. The Government bethought them of a last expedient to provide white labour and preserve the philosophic consistency of Australia for the whites. They introduced as an experiment, under arrangement with the Italian Government, about 350 agricultural labourers from Piedmont, who were eventually to become small yeomen farmers. The Labour Federation attempted to stop the immigration by absurd reports to the Italian Government. They were more successful in defeating the experiment after the arrival of the Piedmontese in Queensland, for by plausible misrepresentations the Italians were induced to desert the plantations, break their contracts, and seek ordinary employment in the towns. As Sir S. W. Griffith said in his manifesto which led to the renewal of the Polynesian Labour Act by the Queensland Parliament, the new unionists would neither work themselves nor allow others to work, except under conditions unknown in any other part of the world, and for wages two or three times more than the possible reward of agriculture in either old countries or new.

The position which the Government and the whole community of Queensland was thus face to face with was this:—By the operation of law, reliable, efficient, and reasonably-paid Kanaka labour was about to be withdrawn. White labourers refused to work in the field, or were prohibited by the unions from working at rates which agriculture can bear. Without labour the cane could not be grown, harvested, or converted into sugar. More than one-fourth of the agricultural land in Queensland under tillage would be thrown out of cultivation, and allowed to revert to jungle. Several thousand white men engaged in the sugar mills as overseers, sugar boilers, engineers, smiths, firemen, &c., and in the open as ploughmen, overseers, draymen, &c., would be thrown out of employment. The foundries at Mackay, Bundaburg, Townsville, Maryborough, and Brisbane, employing many hundreds of skilled artisans would be shut up. The markets in the southern parts of the Colony for maize, horses, food supplies, &c., on the sugar plantations would be closed. Graziers whose runs are already overstocked with fat cattle would have another outlet cut off. A large part

of the shipping on the coast would be dislocated and in some measure wiped out. Already a score of steamers are laid up. A considerable proportion of the population indirectly associated with the sugar industry would suffer a large curtailment of wages. On the security of Acts of Parliament no less than six millions sterling have been invested by the Sugar Planters and their Principals in reclamation works, in clearing the jungle, in breaking and planting the soil, in constructing tramways and private railways, in erecting mills, offices, and dwelling-houses, in building wharves, and on machinery plant, most of it manufactured in Great Britain. As a direct consequence of the overt and disguised action of the new unionists, these six millions were to be, as it were, confiscated. Already several of the largest and finest mills were closed and partially dismantled. No honest, no sane Government could calmly face the impending crushing ruin, the destruction of a great industry, the throwing (wholly or partially) idle of thousands of the best and most active of the population. It would be a blow to commercial prosperity from which it would take generations to recover. The obvious course was to preserve the available Kanaka labour, and renew the Polynesian Labour Act. The effect has been like magic. Commercial confidence is being rapidly restored. A brisk inquiry for selections has set in. New land is being enclosed, and a larger breadth of cane crops than ever has been planted. Dismantled mills are being put in order. Hope, which was all but dead, is stirring the business life from one end of the coastal districts of the colony to another. To veto the Queensland Act to which the Governor, Sir Henry Norman, has given assent in the Queen's name, would not only be a deadly constitutional thrust at Colonial self-government, but open anew the sluice gates of commercial disaster and widespread insolvency."

Advocate's Library, Edinburgh,

W. KINNAIRD ROSE.

May 18th, 1892.

APPENDIX.

ACTS OF PARLIAMENT REGULATING THE LABOUR TRADE.

IMPERIAL.

Pacific Islanders' Protection, 1872.

" " 1875.

COLONIAL.

Polynesian Labourers, 1868 (Repealed by the Act of 1880.)

Pacific Island Labourers, 1880.

Pacific Islanders Employers' Compensation, 1885.

Pacific Island Labourers' Act of 1880. Amendment, 1885.

Pacific Island Labourers' Act, 1880. Amendment, 1886.

Pacific Island Labourers (Extension) 1892.

The Pacific Island Labourers (Extension) Bill was introduced in the Legislative Assembly on March 31 of this year by Sir Samuel Griffith, and read a first time. Its after progress is reported by Reuter's service as follows:—"April 7, passed second reading in Assembly by thirty-nine to thirteen; April 12, passed through Committee; April 13, passed through Committee in Council; April 15, received Governor's consent; Parliament adjourned to June 7. The Assembly divided on the second reading: Ayes (39).—Sir S. W. Griffith, Sir T. M'Ilwraith, Messrs. Hodgkinson, Tozer, Cowley, Unmack, Pattison, Donaldson, Morry, Rutledge, Hyne, Stevenson, Luya, M'Master, Wimble, Hamilton, Little, Dalrymple, Nelson, Agnew, Callan, Philp, Dunsmure, Battersby, Corfield, Adams, Lissner, Powers, Plunkett, Smith, Annear, Grimes, Black, Morehead, Crombie, Morgan, Rees R. Jones, Casey, and Jessop. Noes (13).—Messrs. O'Sullivan, Hoolan, Ryan, Groom, Drake, Glassey, Isambert, Macfarlane, Sayers, Barlow, Salkeld, Gannon, and Cadell. Pairs.—Messrs. Campbell (aye) and Aland (no)."

The first two clauses of the Act deal merely with the title.

REPEALING CLAUSES.

Clause 3 repeals the fifth section of the Act of 1884 and the eleventh section of the Act of 1885. The first of these provides that "When at the expiration of the engagement of any islander he enters into a fresh engagement for service, then if—(a) The sum of £5 has been paid by his first employer to the immigration agent, to defray the cost of his return passage; or (b) that sum has been paid by his then last employer to a former employer under the provisions of this section; the sum so paid shall be recouped by the new employer to the next preceding employer by whom it was so paid." The other section to be repealed is that which enacted that "After the 31st December, 1890, no license to introduce islanders shall be granted."

NEW CLAUSES.

Clause 4 provides that in the Pacific Island Labourers' Acts 1880-92 the term "tropical or semi-tropical agriculture" shall not include any work in connection with the cultivation of maize, or the work of ploughing, or any work done within a sugar factory or sugar refinery.

By clause 5 it is provided that at the expiration of the engagement of a labourer, his employers shall be bound to maintain him until he has an opportunity of returning to his native island, or enters into a fresh agreement with the same or some other employer to serve in tropical or semi-tropical agriculture.

Clause 6, the remaining part of the Bill, is as follows: "The regulations may provide that when a labourer or islander dies during the term of his engagement, any part of the moneys standing to his credit in the Government Savings Bank, or any part of the wages payable to him at the time of his death, shall be applied in payment to his friends or relatives upon his native island, or in the purchase of goods to be delivered to such friends or relatives. Any such regulation shall be valid, and any moneys authorised by the regulations to be so applied may be paid out of the Pacific Islanders' Fund for the purposes so authorised."

REGULATIONS.

The new regulations under the Act are reported from Brisbane to be as follows:—

1. No persons other than British subjects are allowed to engage in the trade, and it is stipulated that separate accommodation shall be provided for women on all the labour vessels, which are required to carry distinguishing flags and marks.
2. Firearms and spirituous liquors are not to be carried except for the ship's use, and each vessel must be provided with three boats and proper life-saving appliances.
3. While the recruiting is being carried on, it is insisted that the Government Agent and the crew shall sleep aboard the vessel.
4. Power is given to prohibit recruiting on any particular island, and it is stipulated that no native shall be engaged by the master of a vessel except in the presence of the Government agent.
5. No woman shall be recruited without the consent of the chief of her tribe.
6. Supplying intoxicating liquors to the islanders is strictly forbidden, except when administered medicinally by order of the Government Agents.
7. In no case are natives under the age of sixteen to be recruited.
8. It is strictly forbidden to recapture any natives who, after engaging themselves, have changed their minds and escaped from the labour vessels.
9. Natives in the employ of Europeans are not to be recruited, and the trade as a whole is to be conducted by persons specially approved by the Government authorities.
10. The engagement of natives on Sunday is forbidden.
11. It is rendered illegal to hire any islander without affording him facilities for procuring the interpretation of his agreement by the Queensland authorities from time to time. In any case in which the rules are disobeyed, the recruiting is to cease at once.
12. It is required that the islanders shall be medically inspected both on their arrival in Queensland, and on their departure from the Colony at the expiration of their period of service.
13. The effects of deceased labourers are to be handed to their relatives, and special hospitals are to be established in Queensland for the reception of natives suffering from illness or accident. [NOTE—I have here summarised the *Times* telegram of May 20.]

Extracts from the Letter of Instructions issued to Government Agents by the Queensland Immigration Office.

“With a view to the checking of abuses in connection with the administration of “The Polynesian Labourers’ Act,” it has been considered desirable that some fit and proper person, appointed by His Excellency the Governor in Council, shall accompany every vessel licensed under the said Act.”

“No applications for licenses to introduce South Sea Island labourers will be granted to others than those engaged in tropical or semi-tropical agriculture.”

“It is the duty of the Inspector to acquaint himself with the circumstances of the applicant, and his sureties, and if he is satisfied that they are such as can be accepted under these instructions, he endorses on the application the following certificate, and returns it to the applicant: “I hereby certify that this applicant is engaged in tropical or semi-tropical agriculture, as the case may be, that his sureties are good and sufficient, and that I know of no reason why his application should not be approved.”

“The official log or diary must be written up daily, and should contain, besides observations of a general nature, a short description of each island visited, the habits and customs of the natives, the means adopted to induce them to recruit, and every incident that is likely to be of interest to the Government.”

"Each Government Agent, before embarking, will be required to examine carefully the medicine chest, clothing, and provisions for the voyage, and if he is satisfied that they are of the description required, sufficient in quantity and of good quality, he will certify the same to the Immigration Agent. Pending this certificate, the ship's clearance must be withheld."

"Government Agents are especially to observe that the position in which they are placed will render them responsible to the Queensland Government alone. In any instance where the master or officers of a vessel may interfere with them in the performance of their duties while carrying out these instructions, it will be incumbent upon them to report the same to the Government by the first available opportunity, or immediately upon the ship's return to the colony."

"Government Agents will be required to see that every labourer so shipped is duly landed along with his property, not only on his own island, but at his own village; and on no account must any islander be landed at any island other than the one from which he originally came, unless he expressly wishes it, in which case a full explanation of the circumstances must be entered in the official log."

"They will be required to see that no oppression or unkindness is practised towards the Island labourers placed under their protection, and that the requirements of the sixteenth and seventeenth sections of the Act regulating the number of passengers to be carried and the accommodation to be provided for them, are strictly observed."

"It will be their duty to see that the full allowance of water and provisions is fairly and regularly served out daily to each labourer in the proportions required by the nineteenth and twentieth sections of the Act."

"While at the Islands they must at all times accompany the boat from the ship to the shore, whether engaged in recruiting or trading, and they must see that proper precautions are taken to prevent reprisals from the natives, and that at all times friendly relations are maintained."

"They are particularly cautioned to see that no coercion, undue influence, unfair play, false representation, or treachery of any kind, is employed in recruiting labourers."

"No engagement must be entered into with any of the natives at the Islands, except in the presence of the Government Agent and with his sanction; nor must any native be brought from the shore to the ship except when accompanied by the Government Agent."

"On no account must any vessel be permitted to recruit with two boats at the same time; but should at any time the Government Agent consider it necessary, he may require the attendance of a second boat for the purpose of acting as a cover for the recruiting boat, and in order to guard against any attack from the natives on shore."

"The attention of Government Agents, masters of labour vessels, and recruiting agents, has been specially directed to the practice which is asserted to have prevailed of giving trade while recruiting Islanders, and by an Order in Council, bearing date the sixth of February, 1878, they have been cautioned to see that each recruit offers himself voluntarily for service in Queensland, and that nothing approaching a sale or barter is mixed up with the engagement."

"If in any case it should appear that trade has been given, either to the chief of any Island, or to the friends or relations of a recruit, or to any other person, by way of purchase or barter of a recruit, the master and officers of the vessel will be prohibited from again going to the Islands, and such other steps as the law directs will be taken to punish the offenders."

"Government Agents are required clearly to explain to each labourer the terms, conditions, and, above all things, the duration of the engagement, and in what portion of the colony he will be required to serve; and at the same time satisfy themselves that the agreement is thoroughly understood before entering his name in the certificate (Form I)."

"After engagement, each labourer, on going on board the ship, must be supplied with the following articles of clothing:—One flannel shirt, one pair of trousers, and one blanket."

“ In the event of any sickness amongst the labourers, the Government Agent will see that at all times proper medicines are administered, and that a full description of the symptoms in each case, and the treatment adopted, are entered in the official log.”

“All deaths during the passage must be carefully noted in the log, and in the event of any casualty amongst the recruits, a return of such casualty, on the proper form of marine reports of deaths, must be made to the District Registrar immediately upon the ship's return to port.”

“Government Agents are directed to endeavour, while strictly enforcing compliance with these instructions, to exercise their authority with such discrimination and courtesy as may be suitable to the circumstances of the case; at the same time it is essential that they should exercise that authority with firmness and decision, not permitting any laxity in the observance of the rules laid down, but insisting upon their strict observance.”

“‘*The Polynesian Labourers Act of 1868*,’” together with the Pacific Islanders Protection Acts 1872 and 1875, will be furnished to each Agent, who will be required to make himself acquainted with all their provisions.”

**Certificate of Government Agent. (To be furnished to the Immigration
Agent or duly appointed Officer with Report of Arrival.)**

I HEREBY certify that

Master of the _____ duly authorised
by the Government of Queensland to carry passengers from the Pacific Islands, and
the undermentioned islanders of the Island of _____ appeared before
me this _____ day of _____ 188 _____, and that the said
_____ has engaged the
said islanders to serve various employers in Queensland for a term of three years,
and has undertaken that they shall be furnished with the undermentioned rations and
clothing, that they shall be paid at the expiration of each six months of their engage-
ments at the rate of £6 a year each in coin of the realm, that they shall be provided
with proper lodging accommodation, and that the cost of their passages to and from
Queensland and all other costs and charges shall be defrayed by their employers, and
that they shall be returned free of expense to this place at the expiration of their
engagements, and that the Government of Queensland shall exercise supervision over
their employers and otherwise protect them during their time of service and during
their passage to and from Queensland.

I further certify that the full meaning and effect of this document has been
explained to the said islanders by me, and that the said islanders have consented to
accompany the said
to Queensland. And I further certify that to the best of my belief none of the said
islanders are suffering from any disease, or are maimed, halt, blind, deaf, idiotic, or
insane.

CLOTHING PER ANNUM.

Hat	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Shirts (flannel or serge)	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Trousers, pairs (moleskin or serge)	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Blankets, pairs	..	..	..	..	..	..	1

RATIONS PER DIEM.

						lbs.	ozs.
Bread or Flour	..	..	..	..	..	1½	0
Beef or Mutton	..	..	..	..	..	1	0
Sugar	..	..	..	..	..	0	5
Tea	..	..	..	..	..	0	0½
Potatoes (or Rice, 6 oz.)	..	..	..	..	..	3	0
Tobacco, per week	..	..	..	..	..	0	2½
Salt	..	..	..	..	..	0	2
Soap, per week	..	..	..	..	..	0	4

POSTSCRIPT.

PARLIAMENT UP TO DATE.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MAY 26.

MR. S. SMITH called attention on the Vote on Account to the revival of the Polynesian Labour Traffic in Queensland. Time will not allow me to say more than that Messrs. S. Smith, Picton, Ellis, and Cunninghame Graham carried out their policy to the bitter end of Division (to Report Progress : motion was defeated by 169 to 67); and that Mr. Balfour, Baron H. De Worms, Professor Bryce, Messrs. W. M'Arthur, and Lawrence, supported the reasonable and constitutional view that her Majesty's Government could not with justice disallow the Queensland Act. Thanks are due to the firm stand made by the Imperial Government, and especially to Lord Knutsford, and Baron H. de Worms.

The discussion was not concluded when the hour for adjournment was reached, Mr. Graham having succeeded in "talking out" the vote by moving to report progress just before midnight.

Extract from speech of Mr. Samuel Smith, the philanthropist :—

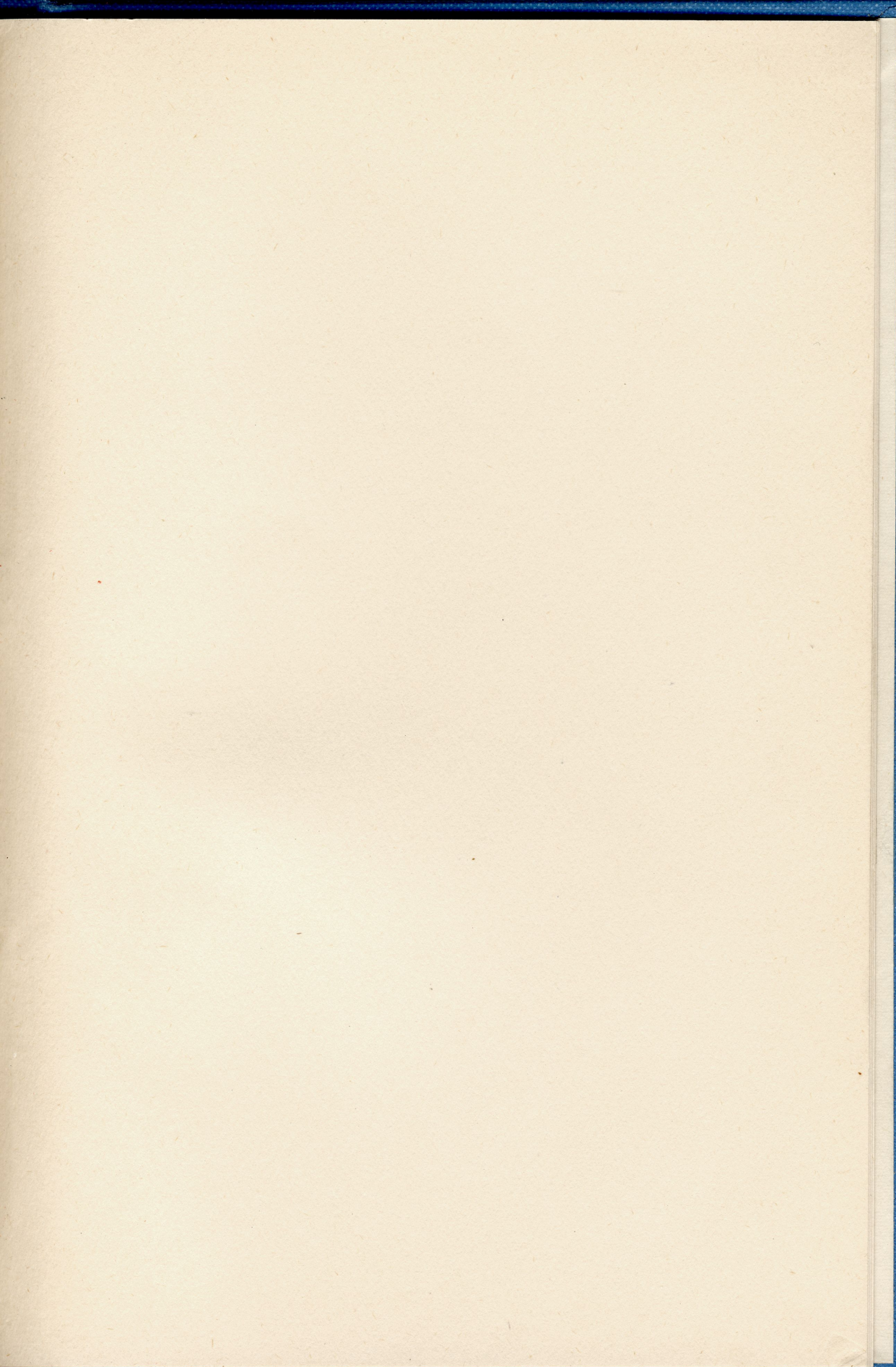
"The Kanaka was quite unused to the steady grind of manual labour, such as he was subjected to on the Queensland plantations; and the traffic was simply the traffic of a slaughter-house. It produced a far more rapid destruction of human beings than even the slave trade in the old days. Mr. Hume Nisbet, who had spent some time in the South Seas, stated in a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* that he had never seen a South Sea islander in a healthy condition after three years' service in Queensland. The nation which would allow such wrongs to go on without a protest would be despicable. (Hear, hear.) The past history of the Queenslanders did not show them to be specially fitted for the control of these helpless natives. The aborigines had been shot down like dogs, and very few remained now. There was no known case of a white man being punished for killing a native, and twenty years ago a man actually received a permit from the Government for the killing of the blacks."

Do these hon. gentlemen wish to raise a quarrel between Great Britain and Queensland?

POSTSCRIPT

PARLIAMENT UP TO DATE

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